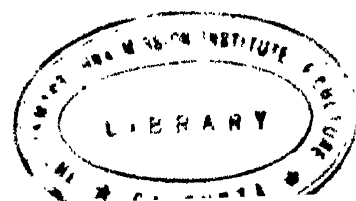


THE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF INDIA

VOLUME I

THE EARLY PHASES

(PREHISTORIC, VEDIC AND UPANIṢADIC, JAINA AND BUDDHIST)

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INTRODUCTION BY
DR. SARVEPALLI RADHAKRISHNAN
Vice-President of India



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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

THE Ramakrishna Mission established this Institute of Culture in 1938 in fulfilment of one of the projects to commemorate the Birth Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna (1936). At the same time the Institute was vested with the entire rights of *The Cultural Heritage of India*. This publication is thus one of the major responsibilities of the Institute; it also serves to fulfil a primary aim of the Institute, which is to promote the study, interpretation, and dissemination of the cultural heritage of India.

The first edition of *The Cultural Heritage of India*, in three volumes and about 2,000 pages, the work of one hundred distinguished Indian scholars, was published in 1937 by the Sri Ramakrishna Birth Centenary Publication Committee as a Birth Centenary memorial. This work presented for the first time a panorama of the cultural history of India, and it was immediately acclaimed as a remarkable contribution to the cultural literature of the world. This edition was sold out within a few years, and the work had long been out of print. When considering the question of a second edition, it was felt that, instead of reprinting the work in its original form, advantage should be taken of the opportunity to enlarge the scope of the work. It was decided to make it more comprehensive, more authoritative, and adequately representative of different aspects of Indian thought, and, at the same time, thoroughly to revise the old articles to bring them up to date.

According to the new scheme drawn up on this basis, the number of volumes has been increased. The plan of arrangement has been improved by grouping the topics in such a way that each volume may be fairly complete and fulfil the requirements of those interested in any particular branch of learning. Each volume will be self-contained, with separate pagination, bibliography, and index. Since due regard will be paid to historicity and critical treatment, it is hoped that this work will provide a useful guide to the study of the complex pattern of India's cultural history.

The distinguished band of scholars who have co-operated so ably in this task have done their work as a labour of love in a spirit of service to scholarship and world understanding. Equally essential to the success of the undertaking was the assistance of the Government of India who made a generous grant towards the cost of publication. Without this dual co-operation, it would have been impossible to set out on a venture of this

magnitude; and to the contributors as well as to the Government of India the Institute therefore expresses its deepest gratitude.

In presenting the first volume of the second edition of *The Cultural Heritage of India* it is perhaps necessary to explain how it happened that it was not the first to be published, for it was preceded by Volume III, which was published in 1953, and by Volume IV, which was published in 1956. The reason for this was that in the first edition of this work there were a fairly large number of representative articles on philosophy and religion, the two subjects which, under the new scheme, had been assigned to Volume III and Volume IV respectively. Thus the preparation of these two volumes acquired an advantage over the others, and it was therefore thought expedient to publish them first. The other volumes, which required much more fresh material, thus gained extra time.

Volume I contains 33 articles, 10 of which appeared in the first edition of this work. Most of these old articles have been thoroughly revised by the authors themselves for the present edition, and sometimes their titles have been suitably altered.

The death, in January 1956, of Professor Haridas Bhattacharyya, M.A., B.L., P.R.S., Darśanasāgara, who edited Volume III and Volume IV of the second edition, was a great loss to the Institute and to the work of *The Cultural Heritage of India*. Professor Bhattacharyya possessed wide knowledge of the subjects dealt with in Volume III and Volume IV, and he successfully completed the editing of these volumes. But the variety of subjects covered by the rest of the volumes demanded a selection of eminent scholars with specialized knowledge to scrutinize and edit the material. The Institute therefore found it necessary to entrust the editing of Volume I to the following four members of the Editorial Board of *The Cultural Heritage of India*: Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji, Dr. Nalinaksha Dutt, Dr. A. D. Pusalker, and Professor Nirmal Kumar Bose. The names of the members of the Board, which is under the chairmanship of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, the President of the Institute, are given elsewhere. The Institute expresses its indebtedness to the editors of Volume I for the unstinted labour they put into their task.

Help has been received from many sources in the preparation of this volume. India's Vice-President, Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, has taken a deep interest in the Institute of Culture since its very inception and has been its President since 1957. His insight into the essential message of Indian culture has earned for him recognition as one of the greatest exponents of India's cultural heritage. To this he adds great devotion to making that message known that it may form the foundation of the regeneration of India and at the same time contribute to the establishment of peace

and unity in the world. It was therefore most fitting that he should write the Introduction to *The Cultural Heritage of India* and introduce it to the world.

The Institute is grateful to many friends for their willing services in the preparation of this volume. Sri Gautamsankar Ray, M.SC., Lecturer in Anthropology, Calcutta University, and Sri Sailendra Nath Sen Gupta, M.A., LL.B., went through the articles on 'The Indus Valley Civilization' and 'Yāska and Pāṇini' respectively, and gave valuable suggestions. Professor Jnanendra Chandra Datta, M.A., greatly helped in preparing the Index. Mr. J. A. O'Brien, Regional Representative of the British Council, Calcutta, and Professor A. G. Stock, Head of the Department of English, Calcutta University, shared the task of going through the articles from the point of view of language. To all these friends the Institute offers sincere thanks for their generous assistance.

It is with a deep sense of loss that we record the death of the following four contributors to the present volume: Sri Madho Sarup Vats, Dr. Bata Krishna Ghosh, Dr. Mahendranath Sircar, and Dr. Beni Madhab Barua.

It has to be remembered that the subcontinent of India has been one cultural unit throughout the ages, cutting across political boundaries. For the purpose of the articles in *The Cultural Heritage of India*, which attempts to give an account of the cultural heritage of India from the most ancient times to the present day, India therefore means the subcontinent of India, i.e. cultural India, irrespective of political divisions, and this use has in no way any political implication.

This volume tells the story of the way in which, many centuries ago, the foundations were laid of that mighty edifice which is described through the pages of *The Cultural Heritage of India*. The many-sided structure which grew up in the course of time represents a great diversity of thought and forms. It was the unique nature of the foundations that made such a structure possible, for the foundations embodied and established principles which, being universally true, lent themselves to infinite expression. Each new portion of the edifice, as it arose, was therefore acceptable to the whole as one more form of expression of those principles.

The principles which form the foundation of India's cultural heritage were established as the result of observation, study, and experiment. Religion became a science. The Upaniṣads declare that that science is the greatest which makes man know That which never changes and by knowing which everything is known. It was this science, the science of the soul, that became the national characteristic, the vitality of the race. This science

established the principle of the spiritual oneness underlying the great variety found in the world, the world of thought as well as the physical world. This not only resolved all contradictions and differences, it also embraced life in all its aspects, and formed the basis on which social organization was founded.

India's strength rests upon the principles of the unity of man, the unity of thought, and the unity of spiritual experience. She has flourished when they have been well expressed, and she has degenerated when they have been forgotten or submerged. India lives today because, in spite of centuries of degeneration, these principles have been kept alive in the national consciousness. India shows a resurgence of strength today, and that strength will be measured by the degree to which she can succeed in putting these principles into practice, adapting them to the special conditions of the modern world.

The particular significance of adapting these principles to modern conditions lies in the fact that modern science and the influences of western civilization play a decisive rôle in the life of India today. Western civilization carries forward the basic idea of Greek civilization, the idea of 'expression'. The expansion and expression of good through society forms the basis of western civilization. Today, under the direct influence of western powers of expression and progress, India is being forced up. The keynote of her own culture is 'thought', and while, with the passage of centuries, Indian powers of thought have not diminished, what has diminished is the power of expression. Now we find that western influences have roused India, and her powers of thought can find their fulfilment in expression. The way forward for India lies in combining the power of expression with the power of thought. This becomes possible when both are viewed basically as different aspects of the same urge. For what man everywhere is trying to do consciously or unconsciously—and the whole meaning of life centres in this—is to transcend all limitations, physical, mental, and spiritual.

Thus we find that the interplay of cultures is of significance to the whole world. Western culture, in its turn, is now feeling the need of some other power besides the power of expression. The West has discovered that no amount of political or social manipulation of human conditions can cure the evils of life. Thus it has come about that, aided by its own science which has demonstrated the physical oneness of the universe, the West is now ready to recognize the basic universal principle of the spiritual oneness of the universe and the divine nature of man. On the basis of this principle, western ways of thought, ethics, and the need for expression find their rationale and their fulfilment.

This integration of cultures does not imply the merging of one culture into another. Western culture would retain its own basic idea, the idea of expression, of going outwards to conquer external nature and thus transcend physical limitations. But that going outwards would then be based upon the ability to go inwards also. Balance or wholeness would be achieved, because the power to express outwards would be equalled by the power to perceive the underlying spiritual unity of all things, making it possible to transcend mental and spiritual limitations also. Indian culture, similarly, would retain its own basic idea, the idea that the aim of man is to manifest the divinity within him, transcending mental and spiritual limitations. But this ability to go deep into the depths of internal nature would be accompanied by great activity, a longing for social improvement and the ability to effect it, fortitude, self-reliance, and strength. Social good will thus become the expression of the underlying spiritual unity. Balance or wholeness would be achieved, because the power to perceive that underlying spiritual unity would be equalled by the power to express it outwardly.

The interplay between different cultures of the world being constant, this example leads us to the conception of world culture. The integration of all cultures through the principles which are basic to them all makes possible growth and fulfilment without the loss of individuality. Every culture, every nation, has its part to play. The conception of world culture implies wholeness, achieved in various ways, and achieved without the loss of individual cultural values. It takes man to the very centre of his problem of life on earth, for it shows him not only how to live fully in a glorious universe, but to live in the consciousness of his own true nature which is one with the spirit behind that universe.

The publication of *The Cultural Heritage of India*, will, it is hoped, contribute in some measure to the appreciation of Indian cultural values and point to the part which India can play in the future world renaissance.

October 1958

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a	stands	for	अ	and	sounds	like	*o*	in	c*o*me
ā	,,	,,	आ	,,	,,	,,	*a*	,,	f*a*r
i	,,	,,	इ	,,	,,	,,	*i*	,,	b*i*t
ī	,,	,,	ई	,,	,,	,,	*ee*	,,	f*ee*l
u	,,	,,	उ	,,	,,	,,	*u*	,,	f*u*ll
ū	,,	,,	ऊ	,,	,,	,,	*oo*	,,	c*oo*l
ṛ	,,	,,	ऋ	,,	may be pronounced like *ri* in *ri*ng				
e	,,	,,	ए	,,	sounds	like	*a*	in	c*a*ke
ai	,,	,,	ऐ	,,	,,	,,	*i*	,,	m*i*te
o	,,	,,	ओ	,,	,,	,,	*o*	,,	n*o*te
au	,,	,,	औ	,,	,,	,,	*ou*	,,	c*ou*nt
ṁ	,,	,,	ं	(*anusvāra*)	and	sounds	like *m* in so*m*e		
ḥ	,,	,,	ः	(*visarga*),	and	sounds	,,	soft, short *h*	

' (apostrophe) stands for ऽ (elided अ).

ṅ stands for ङ्, ñ for ञ्, and ṇ for ण् ; the first is to be pronounced like English *ng* in si*ng*, or *n* in ba*n*k ; the second like the *n* in English si*n*ge (a palatal n) ; and the third, the cerebral ṇ, is made with the tongue-tip up-turned and touching the dome of the palate.

c	stands	for	च्	and	sounds	like	*ch*	in	chur*ch*
ch	,,	,,	छ्	,,	,,	,,	*chh*	,,	chur*ch-h*ill
ṭ	,,	,,	ट्	,,	,,	,,	*t*	,,	cur*t*
ṭh	,,	,,	ठ्	,,	,,	,,	*th*	,,	por*t-h*ole
ḍ	,,	,,	ड्	,,	,,	,,	*d*	,,	bir*d*
ḍh	,,	,,	ढ्	,,	,,	,,	*dh*	,,	bir*d-h*ouse
t	,,	,,	त्	,,	,,	,,	*t*	,,	pa*t* (Italian *t*)
th	,,	,,	थ्	,,	,,	,,	*th*	,,	hi*t-h*ard
d	,,	,,	द्	,,	,,	,,	*d*	,,	ha*d* (Italian *d*)
dh	,,	,,	ध्	,,	,,	,,	*dh*	,,	ma*d-h*ouse
v	,,	,,	व्	,,	,,	,,	*v* or *w*	,,	le*v*y, *w*ater
ś	,,	,,	श्	,,	,,	,,	*sh*	,,	*sh*ip
ṣ	,,	,,	ष्	,,	,,	,,	*sh*	,,	*sh*ould
ḷ	,,	,,	ळ	,,	,,	,,	the cerebral *l*, made with the tongue-tip up-turned and touching the dome of the palate.		

The following points should also be noted:

(1) All Sanskrit words, except when they are proper nouns, or have come into common use in English, or represent a class of literature, cult, sect, or school of thought, are italicized.

(2) Excepting in the case of words like '*karma*', the bases of Sanskrit nouns are used, as *sannyāsin*, *svāmin*, etc.

(3) Anglicized Sanskrit words like 'kārmic', 'sāṁsāric', 'Arhathood', etc. are Romanized.

(4) Current geographical names, except in cases where their Sanskrit forms are given, or in special cases where the context requires it, and all modern names from the commencement of the nineteenth century are given in their usual spelling and without diacritical marks.

ABBREVIATIONS

A. V.	*Atharva-Veda*
Ai. U.	*Aitareya Upaniṣad*
B. G.	*Bhagavad-Gītā*
B. S.	*Brahma-Sūtra*
Bhā.	*Bhāgavata*
Bṛ. U.	*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*
Chā. U.	*Chāndogya Upaniṣad*
G. O. S.	*Gaekwad's Oriental Series, Baroda*
Ī. U.	*Īśa Upaniṣad*
Ka. U.	*Kaṭha Upaniṣad*
Ke. U.	*Kena Upaniṣad*
Mā. U.	*Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad*
Mbh.	*Mahābhārata*
Mu. U.	*Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*
Pra. U.	*Praśna Upaniṣad*
P. T. S.	*Pali Text Society, London*
Rām.	*Rāmāyaṇa*
Ṛ. V.	*Ṛg-Veda*
S. B. B.	*Sacred Books of the Buddhists, Oxford*
S. B. E.	*Sacred Books of the East, Oxford*
Śve. U.	*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*
Tai. U.	*Taittirīya Upaniṣad*
U.	*Upaniṣad*
Y. V.	*Yajur-Veda*

THE SPIRIT OF INDIA

I LOVE INDIA, not because I cultivate the idolatry of geography, not because I have had the chance to be born in her soil, but because she has saved through tumultuous ages the living words that have issued from the illuminated consciousness of her great sons—*Satyaṁ Jñānam Anantaṁ Brahma*: Brahma is Truth, Brahma is Wisdom, Brahma is Infinite; *Śāntaṁ Śivam Advaitam*: Peace is in Brahma, goodness is in Brahma, and the unity of all beings.

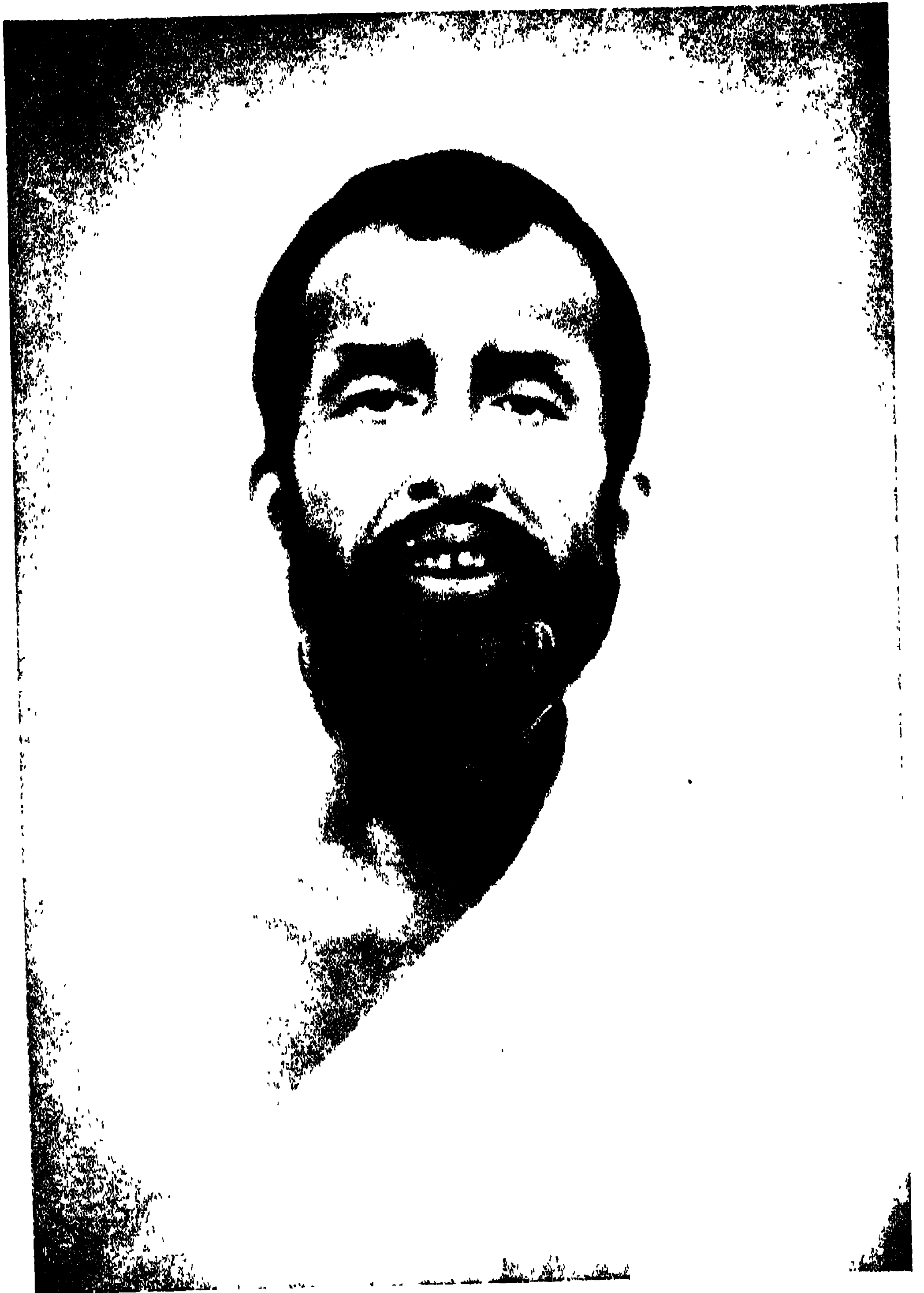
Brahma-niṣṭho gṛhasthaḥ syāt
tattvajñāna-parāyaṇaḥ,
Yad yat karma prakurvīta
tad Brahmaṇi samarpayet.

'The householder shall have his life established in Brahma, shall pursue the deeper truth of all things, and in all activities of life dedicate his works to the Eternal Being.'

Thus we have come to know that what India truly seeks is not a peace which is in negation, or in some mechanical adjustment, but that which is in *Śivam,* in goodness; which is in *Advaitam,* in the truth of perfect union; that India does not enjoin her children to cease from *karma,* but to perform their *karma* in the presence of the Eternal, with the pure knowledge of the spiritual meaning of existence; that this is the true prayer of Mother India:

Ya eko'varṇo bahudhā śaktiyogāt,
Varṇān anekān nihitārtho dadhāti;
Vicaiti cānte viśvam ādau sa devaḥ,
Sa no buddhyā śubhayā saṁyunaktu.

He who is one, who is above all colour distinctions, who dispenses the inherent needs of men of all colours, who comprehends all things from their beginning to the end, let Him unite us to one another with wisdom, which is the wisdom of goodness.



SRI RAMAKRISHNA

In Later Days

INTRODUCTION TO THE FIRST EDITION

I

THIS Centenary Volume brings together the different systems of thought, belief, and practice which have developed in India from the dawn of reflection. Though this amorphous mass appears at first sight to be more an encyclopaedia of varying philosophies and sects than a continuous and uninterrupted development of one system, closer second thought reveals a pervading unity which binds together the bizarre multiplicity of beliefs and practices. The different systems described in this volume possess a unity of character and attitude which makes the manifold a single whole, which we might describe as the Hindu spirit. The civilization which is inspired by the spiritual insight of our sages is marked by a certain moral integrity, a fundamental loyalty, a fine balance of individual desires and social demands, and it is these that are responsible for its vitality and continuity. To a departure from the ideals can be traced the present weakness and disorder of the Hindu civilization.

INDIA AND SPIRITUAL LIFE

Spiritual life is the true genius of India. Those who make the greatest appeal to the Indian mind are not the military conquerors, not the rich merchants or the great diplomats, but the holy sages, the *ṛṣis* who embody spirituality at its finest and purest. India's pride is that almost in every generation and in every part of the country, from the time of her recorded history, she has produced these holy men who embody for her all that the country holds most dear and sacred. Though they generally remain away from the main stream of life, kings and commoners pay reverent homage to them and take their advice in the problems of their personal lives as well as in public affairs. By their lives they teach us that pride and power, wealth and glory, are nothing in comparison with the power of Spirit. It is those who scorn their own lives that raise life above our scorn.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND MYSTICAL TRADITION

Sri Ramakrishna is one such *ṛṣi*, though not the only one of his kind. He is one of those rare beings in whom the flame of spiritual life burns so brightly that all who come near are able to share the illumination and see the world new-born as on the first day. He is an illustrious example of

the mystical tradition which runs right through the religious history of this country from the days of the Vedic *ṛṣis*. This tradition may sometimes have been overcome by a ceremonial piety or by a rationalist dogma. Yet it always reappears faithful to its original pattern. Its characteristic tendencies are those set forth in the Upaniṣads.

II

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

Religion is a matter of experience. It is not an awakening from a swoon, but a transformation of one's being. It is not an addition to one's intellectual furniture, but an exaltation of one's personality into the plane of the universal Spirit. It is *Brahmadarśana*—insight into Reality, a direct awareness of the world of values.

Religious experience is not to be confused with the pursuit of truth, beauty, or goodness. It is a life of adoring love transcending these. The Divine is not a mere sum of knowledge, love, and beauty. The ultimate Reality which responds to our demands is more than rational. Religion means awe more than service, holiness more than virtue. We worship not what we can, but what we cannot understand. There is the Unknown, the reserve of truth, which the intellect cannot reach and yet feels to lie behind. There is an element of mystery in all religion, an incomprehensible certainty which is not to be explained by grammar or logic. Life is open only to life. Religious experience, when genuine, is characterized by vividness, directness, freshness, and joy. In it we feel the impact of Reality. It is spiritual discovery, not creation. The men of experience feel the presence of God and do not argue about it. The shoals and shallows of existence are submerged in a flood-tide of joy.

GOD AND THE UNIVERSE

We do not infer God from our feeling of dependence or an analysis of the self. The reality of God is revealed in an immediate intuition of the essential dependence of all finite things, of the priority of absolute to relative being.

Though the experience is beyond reason, it is not opposed to reason. While the Upaniṣads emphasize the direct awareness of the world of Spirit, they also adduce reasons in support of the reality of Spirit. Their approach is both objective and subjective.

Each order of reality known to us is only truly apprehended from a standpoint higher than itself. The significance of the physical world (*anna*) is disclosed in the biological (*prāṇa*); that of the biological in the

psychological (*manas*); that of the psychological in the logical and ethical (*vijñāna*). The logical finds its meaning in the spiritual (*ānanda*). The drift of the world has an underlying tendency, a verifiable direction towards some implied fulfilment. If the vast process of the world leads up to the spiritual, we are justified in finding in the spiritual the best clue to the understanding of the world.

It is now admitted that the forms and properties of matter; animals and plants, in their varied classes and orders; and human beings, with their power of choice between good and evil, did not come into existence in their present form by a direct act of Almighty God, but assumed their present forms in slow obedience to a general law of change. The higher exerts a curious pressure on the happenings of the lower and moulds it. This fact requires explanation, and modern philosophers confirm the suggestions of the Upaniṣads on this question.

Professor Lloyd Morgan, who studies the problem from the biological side, affirms that while resultants can be explained as the results of already existing conditions, emergents like the advent of life, mind, and reflective personality cannot be explained without the assumption of divine activity. The progressive emergence, in the course of evolution, of life, mind, and personality, requires us to assume a creative Principle operative in nature, a timeless Reality in the temporal.

Professor A. N. Whitehead argues, after Plato, that there are eternal objects, answering to the eternal forms or patterns of Plato, and makes God transcend both the eternal objects and the concrete occasions. He is the active source of limitation or determination. For Plato also, the ideal world ruled by the supreme Idea of the Good is different from the creative God. The Supreme Being is the Ideal world, and the Demiurge contemplates the Ideas and their unity in relation to the Idea of the Good and reproduces this heavenly pattern as far as is possible in time and space. Plato does not tell us what exactly the relation of form to sensible fact is; nor does Whitehead tell us what exactly the relation of eternal object to concrete occasion is. Is a sensible thing a mere assemblage of forms or eternal objects or universals or is it more?

Aristotle felt that Plato's mistake lay in separating the universal characters from sensible things and setting up these supersensible abstractions as the source of the things we see. Aristotle believes that he gets over the difficulty by affirming that the form exists only in the individual thing and is just its essential character. The solution is not quite so simple. We still ask, what is the status of eternal objects and how are they related to the things we perceive? What is the position of moral ideas and how are they

related to moral facts? Whatever these difficulties may be, it is agreed that the universe is not self-explanatory.

When we consider the nature of cosmic process with its ascent from matter to spirit, we are led to the conception of a supreme Being who is the substantiation of all values. These values are not only the revealed attributes of God, but the active causes of the world. Till these values are realized, God is transcendent to the process, though He inspires it. God is the creator, destroyer, and sustainer of this universe. He transcends all creatures as the active power in which they take their rise.

GOD AND THE SELF

An analysis of the self yields the same result. The Upaniṣads undertake an analysis of the self and make out that the reality of the self is the divine universal consciousness. It is needless to repeat here the careful accounts which the *Chāndogya* and the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣads* relate.[1] Some modern thinkers arrive at similar results. The Jīvātman is not a *substance*, but an *activity*, what Aristotle calls *energeia* or self-maintaining activity.

We have to distinguish the logical subject from the substratum of qualities. The former is a logical problem, while the latter is an ontological one. So long as we adopt the 'substance' theory of the self, difficulties arise. Locke was obliged to reduce substance to an unknowable substratum, a something he knows not what, which supports its attributes, he knows not how. It becomes a superfluous entity and rightly did Berkeley abolish material substance altogether. Its attributes, which he called ideas, could just as well be said to inhere in one divine mind as in a multitude of unknowable substrata. But Berkeley retained spiritual substance, for, according to him, the essence of any existent thing is to be perceived by a mind.

Hume applied a more rigorous analysis. He breaks up the self into a succession of impressions and ideas. He would recognize nothing in the mind except these: 'When I enter most intimately into what I call myself,' he said, 'I always stumble on some particular perception or other of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never can catch *myself* at any time without a perception, and never can observe anything but the perception.' He infers that 'were all my perceptions removed by death, I should be entirely annihilated'. For him there is nothing 'simple and continued'. 'The successive perceptions only constitute the mind.'[2] But Hume's analysis does not account for the continuity of self and the

[1] See the writer's *Philosophy of the Upanishads* (George Allen & Unwin, London. Revised Second Edition, 1935).
[2] *Treatise of Human Nature* (Ed. by Selby Bigge), pp. 252-53.

feeling of identity. How can a series of feelings be aware of itself as a series? Hume has no answer to this question but takes shelter under 'the privilege of a sceptic'.

Kant, however, was greatly disturbed by the precarious position in which Hume left the problem of knowledge. He started with Hume's analysis and tried to cure its defects by the use of *a priori* principles. But he conceived the self on the analogy of material substance, as the permanent in change, which is necessary for the perception of change. He did not raise the question of the relation of changing attributes to the unchanging substance. Does the substance itself change when the attributes do?

We must seek for the source of substance not in the external persistence in space, but in the internal continuity of memory. The question, why do the contents of the mind hang together, how are they unified, Kant answers by referring us to the transcendental subject, to which all experiences are finally to be referred. It is the subject which is the correlate of all objects. But it is only the logical subject, and is not to be confused with the metaphysical soul or a spiritual substance which is simple and indissoluble and therefore immortal. Even McTaggart, in the second chapter of his *Studies in Hegelian Cosmology,* attempts to establish the immortality of the self on the ground of its immutability. But that which is immutable and therefore immortal is not the empirical self. This transcendental Self is the Paramātman, functioning in all minds. It is not capable of existing in the plural. There is only one transcendental Self and our empirical selves are psychical facts, streams of change. The Jīvātman is not a substance, but an activity, whose nature is to change continuously. Whether we look at the real from the objective or the subjective point of view, the real can be defined only as Spirit.

Though the being of man is Spirit, his nature is complex and unstable. There are other grades and kinds of life in the human individual. That is why he has the creaturely sense over against the transcendent majesty of God, the spaceless Spirit of all individual spirits.

III

GOD AND MAN

Those who live in God do not care to define. They have a peculiar confidence in the universe, a profound and peaceful acceptance of life in all its sides. Their response to ultimate Reality is not capable of a clear-cut, easily intelligible formulation. The mystery of God's being cannot be rationally determined. It remains outside the scope of logical concepts. Its form does not lie in the field of vision, none can see it with the eye.

There is no equal to it. An austere silence is more adequate to the experience of God than elaborate descriptions.

The Upaniṣads often give negative accounts of the supreme Reality. God is nothing that *is*. He is non-being. Pagans like Plotinus and Christians like Nicholas of Cusa support the negative theology of the Upaniṣads. This negative theology also gives us a knowledge of Divinity. It affirms that Divinity is not perceived by the categories of reason. It is grasped by the revelations of spiritual life.

When positive accounts are given, we abandon concepts in favour of symbols and myths. They are better suited to life which is inexhaustible and unfathomable. God is regarded as father, friend, lover. Infinite power and infinite love are both revelations of God. God is infinite love that pours forth at every time and every place its illimitable grace on all that ardently seek for it. The divine solicitude for man is easy of comprehension when we look upon the Divine as Mother. She wishes to possess us and so will pursue and track us down in our hiding places. God is in search of us. This conception has been made familiar to us by Francis Thomson's *The Hound of Heaven*.[3] Among the worshippers of the Divine as Mother, Ramakrishna holds a high place.[4] In polytheistic religions, the nature of the Divine becomes as it were divided into fragments.

GOD AND THE ABSOLUTE

The positive descriptions are variations of the central theme that God is a person. The negative theology makes out that even personality is a symbol. In later Vedānta, a distinction is drawn between the Absolute Brahman and the Personal Īśvara. Śaṅkara says: 'Brahman is realized in its twofold aspect: In one aspect it is endowed with the *upādhis* (adjuncts) of name and form, that are subject to modification and cause differentia-

[3] Cf. Pascal, *Mystere de Jesus*: 'I have loved thee', said Christ to Pascal, 'more ardently than thou hast loved thy defilements.'

[4] Compare the lines of *Any Mother* by Katharine Tynan:

There is no height, no depth, my own, could set us apart
Body of mine and soul of mine; heart of my heart!

. . . .

If some day you came to me heavy with sin,
I, your mother, would run to the door and let you in.
I would wash you white again with my tears and grief,
Body of mine and soul of mine, till you found relief.
Though you had sinned all sins there are 'twixt east and west,
You should find my arms wide for you, your head on my breast.
Child, if I were in Heaven one day and you were in Hell—
Angels white as my spotless one stumbled and fell—
I would leave for you the fields of God and Queen Mary's feet,
Straight to the heart of Hell would go seeking my sweet,
God mayhap would turn him round at sound of the door,
Who is it goes out from me to come back no more?
Then the blessed Mother of God would say from her throne:
'Son, 'tis a mother goes to Hell seeking her own.'

tion; and in the other it is just the opposite (bereft of all *upādhis*), i.e. the transcendental Reality.'

The Absolute answers to the essential deity, of which Eckhart speaks, deeper than God Himself and the groundlessness of Boehme. Brahman and Īśvara, Absolute and God, are not contradictory, but complementary to each other. Each is the perspective offered to the mental standpoint of the seeker. Religious experience also lends support to this dual conception. It has normally two sides, an experience of personal intercourse with a Personal God as well as a sense of rest and completeness in an absolute Spirit which is more than personal. If the latter alone were experienced, we should not lapse from the condition of absolute freedom. It is because our natures are rooted in the world of space-time as well that we look up to the Absolute as something different from us, with whom it is possible for us to have personal relations. There are experiences of men who are convinced that they are working with God, thinking and striving under pressure from Him. For them God is not an unchanging Absolute, a Being perfect in nature and realization. God is aiming at something through the medium of the human. There is a sense in which God has real need of us and calls us to share in his increasing victories and another in which God is timeless, and completes our being. When we emphasize the former aspect, we call it the Supreme God: when we lay stress on the latter, we call it the Absolute.

BRAHMAN, ĀTMAN, AND ĪŚVARA

There are three terms in constant use in the Indian religious vocabulary, which bring out different aspects of the Supreme: Brahman, Ātman, and Īśvara. These words are used with little appreciation of the distinctions implied by them. Brahman is the Immense, the Vast, the Ultimate, permeating all the universe and yet eluding any conceptual definition. We experience its living reality, its otherness, its unconditionedness by all that is of this world. To the logical mind its character is not clear and yet its reality is apprehended as something which contrasts with the time-series. We have direct relationship with it. Brahman is the name we give to that substantial and eternal Being. It is the object of our metaphysical quest. It is the transcendent and abiding Reality which is far beyond the world of succession, though it gives meaning to the process and supports it all through.

Since it is apprehended by us it is clear that we have in us a quality which apprehends it. It is we that possess the ineffable consciousness of the Eternal. The soul it is that becomes aware of Brahman. The Absolute is Spirit. Though unspeakable in its transcendence, the Supreme is yet the

most inward part of our being. Though Brahman in one sense entirely transcends us, in another sense it is intimately present in us. The Eternal Being, Brahman, is Spirit, Ātman. That which we indicate with awe as the Absolute, is also our own transcendental essence. It is the ground of our being, that in which our reality consists.

Off and on, in some rare moments of our spiritual life, the soul becomes aware of the presence of the Divine. A strange awe and delight invade the life of the soul and it becomes convinced of the absoluteness of the Divine, which inspires and moulds every detail of our life. To bring out that God is both transcendent and immanent, that He is a presence as well as a purpose, the conception of Īśvara is used. It affirms the ever-present pressure of God on the here and now. He is the lord and giver of life, in this world and yet distinct from it, penetrating all, yet other than all. Īśvara is the Absolute entering into the world of events and persons, operating at various levels but most freely in the world of souls. Īśvara as the divine Presence is maintaining, helping, and preserving the whole world to move up, at every plane, in every person, and at every point, to reach towards greater perfection, to get into conformity with its own thought for the world. It is the pure, Absolute Brahman acting. The religious sense that spiritual energy breaks through from another plane of being, modifying or transforming the chain of cause and effect, finds its fulfilment in the concept of Īśvara. As the Upaniṣad has it: 'The divine Intelligence is the lord of all, the all-knower, the indwelling Spirit, the source of all, the origin and end of all creation.'

IV

CATHOLICITY OF HINDUISM

In Hinduism the descriptions of the Supreme are many-sided and comprehensive. A catholic religion expresses itself in a variety of forms and comprehends all the relations which exist between man and God. Some of the great religions of the world select one or the other of the great relations, exalt it to the highest rank, make it the centre and relate all else to it. They become so intolerant as to ignore the possibility of other relations and insist on one's acceptance of their own point of view as giving the sole right of citizenship in the spiritual world. But Hinduism provides enough freedom for a man to go forward and develop along his own characteristic lines. It recognizes that the divine light penetrates only by degrees and is distorted by the obscurity of the medium which receives it. Our conception of God answers to the level of our mind and interests. Hinduism admits that

religion cannot be compressed within any juridical system or reduced to any one single doctrine.

The different creeds mark out the way of the spirit. Religious life has to be built through their aid. Ramakrishna practised forms of worship not only of the different Hindu sects, but also those of Islam and Christianity. From actual experience, he established that the goal of all religions is the same. 'As the same sugar is made into various figures of birds and beasts,' Ramakrishna used to say, 'so one sweet Mother Divine is worshipped in various climes and ages under various names and forms. Different creeds are but different paths to reach the Almighty. As with one gold various ornaments are made, having different forms and names, so one God is worshipped in different countries and ages, and has different forms and names.'[5] Real contradictions are found more often in mediocre minds, but the vastness of soul of the spiritually profound gathers within itself opinions and tendencies profoundly contradictory.

SYMBOLISM IN RELIGION

Idolatry is a much abused term. Even those who oppose it are unable to escape from it. The very word brings up to our mind thoughts of graven images, strange figures of frightful countenances, horrid animals, and shapes, and so long as the worshippers confuse these outer symbols with the deeper divine Reality, they are victims of idolatry.

But, as a matter of fact, religion cannot escape from symbolism, from icons and crucifixes, from rites and dogmas. These forms are employed by religion to focus its faith, but when they become more important than the faith itself, we have idolatry. A symbol does not subject the Infinite to the finite, but renders the finite transparent. It aids us to see the Infinite through it. When, however, we confuse the symbol with the Reality, exalt the relative into the Absolute, difficulties arise and an unjustified idolatry develops.

It is this idolatry that stands in the way of religious fellowship and understanding today. Every dogmatic religion overlooks the spiritual facts and worships the theological opinions. It is more anxious for the spread of its dogmas than for the spiritual education of human race. If we realize the true place of symbolism, then we shall not bother about how men reach the knowledge of spiritual Reality.

The different religious groups bound within themselves by means of rites and ceremonies militate against the formation of a human society. Intuitive religion rebels against these communal and national gods, confident

[5] Max Müller: *Rāmakrishna: His Life and Sayings* (Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta, 1951), p. 100.

in the strength of the one Spirit whose presence works and illuminates the whole of mankind.

ABSOLUTE AND THE UNIVERSE

The Absolute which is timeless is reflected in some fashion in our world of space and time. The world is the appearance of the Absolute. It is the *vivarta* of the Absolute. The unity of the Absolute is not affected by the plurality of existent worlds, though the world is an expression of the Absolute. Of course, the nature of the Absolute is by no means exhausted by this world or for that matter by any number of such worlds, and the changes of the varied worlds do not in any way affect the unity of the Absolute. We cannot, however, say that the empirical universe is the result of the apprehending consciousness, for that would mean the Absolute is a thing in itself and the world a mere appearance, and there is nothing to tell us whether it is an appearance or whether there is a thing in itself at the back of it. Much the best solution is to admit that the world expresses the Absolute without in any way interfering with its unity and integrity. Such a kind of relationship is what is called *vivarta* by Indian thinkers.

Without being content with such a view, we sometimes make out that the real is not pure Being which excludes all negation, but a self-conscious Principle which involves a certain negation of absolute Reality. God is a form of absolute Being. Even as the world is distinct from, and is in a sense a negation of the absolute Being, God is a limited expression of the Absolute. So far as God is concerned, the world is as necessary to God as God is to the world. God would not be God but for the world which expresses Him. The world is an expression or *pariṇāma* of God, though a *vivarta* of the Absolute.

VI

KARMA AND MUKTI

The idea of *karma* has been with us from the beginning of philosophic reflection. The self is a composite of mind, body, and activities.[6] Surely 'one becomes good by good action, and bad by bad action'.[7] When a man dies, the two things that accompany him are *vidyā* and *karma*.[8] 'According as one acts, according as one conducts, so does one become.'[9] Desire becomes

[6] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, I.6.1.
[7] *Ibid.*, III.2.13.
[8] *Ibid.*, IV.4.2.
[9] *Ibid.*, IV.4.5.

action, and actions determine the course of life. Evolution of life goes on until salvation is attained.

Salvation or *mukti* is life eternal and has nothing to do with continuance in endless time. No adequate account of *mukti* can be given since it transcends the limitations with which human life is bound up. So the question of the nature of salvation, whether it is individual or universal, has no relevance or meaning when applied to life eternal, which is altogether a different life.

The question becomes important when we attempt to describe the state of salvation from the standpoint of the empirical world. Whether salvation is individual or universal has significance only on the basis of the plurality of individual souls on the empirical plane. If in this universe we have only one soul, then salvation of that soul means the redemption of the whole universe. In the Ekajīvavāda, universal salvation and individual salvation are identical.

Though some later Advaitins adopt this position, Śaṅkara is opposed to it. If all the different souls are only one Jīva, then, when, for the first time, any soul attains liberation, bondage should have terminated for all, which is not the case. He says: 'No man can actually annihilate this whole existing world. ... And if it actually could be done, the first released person would have done it once for all, so that at present the whole world would be empty, earth and all other substances having been finally annihilated.'[10]

From the empirical standpoint, a plurality of individuals is assumed by Śaṅkara and many of his followers. On this view, salvation does not involve the destruction of the world. It implies the disappearance of a false view of the world. The idea is further elucidated by Śaṅkara in the *Sūtra-bhāṣya*: 'Of what nature is that so-called annihilation of the apparent world? Is it analogous to the annihilation of hardness in congealed clarified butter (*ghee*), which is effected by bringing it into contact with fire? Or is the apparent world of names and forms which is superimposed upon Brahman by nescience to be dissolved by knowledge, just as the phenomenon of a double moon which is due to a disease of the eyes is removed by the application of medicine?'[11]

TYPES OF MUKTI AND THE STATE OF THE RELEASED

Śaṅkara admits that the world-appearance persists for the *jīvanmukta* or the *sthitaprajña* of the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. The *jīvanmukta*, though he realizes *mokṣa* or *Brahmabhāva*, still lives in the world. The appearance of multiplicity is not superseded. It is with him as with a patient suffering

[10] *Brahma-Sūtra-bhāṣya*, III.2.21. [11] *Ibid.*, III.2.21.

from *timira* that, though he knows there is only one moon, sees two. Only it does not deceive the freed soul, even as the mirage does not tempt one who has detected its unreal character. Freedom consists in the attainment of a universality of spirit or *sarvātmabhāva.* Embodiment continues after the rise of the saving knowledge. Though the spirit is released, the body persists. While the individual has attained inner harmony and freedom, the world-appearance still persists and engages his energies. Full freedom demands the destruction of the world-appearance as well. Śaṅkara's view of the *jīvanmukta* condition makes out that inner perfection and work in the finite universe can go together.

It is usually thought that at death the soul attains final liberation or *videhamukti.* It is not easy to reconcile this view with Śaṅkara's other statement that Apāntaratamas, Bhṛgu, and Nārada even after death work for the saving of the world.[12] These are said to be the 'possessors of the complete knowledge of the Vedas'. Śaṅkara writes: 'The continuance of the bodily existence of Apāntaratamas and others depends on the offices which they discharge for the sake of the world. As the sun, who after having for thousands of ages performed the office of watching over these worlds, at the end of that period, enjoys the condition of release in which he neither rises nor sets, so Apāntaratamas and others continue as individuals, although they possess complete knowledge, which is the cause of release, and obtain release only when their office comes to an end.' So long as their offices last their *karmas* cannot be said to be exhausted. Śaṅkara here admits that *samyagdarśana,* though it is the cause of release, does not bring about final release, and the liberated individuals are expected to contribute to *lokasthiti* or world-maintenance. Their *karma* can never be fully exhausted, so long as the world demands their services.

This view is not to be confused with *kramamukti* or gradual release which is the aim of those who are devoted to Kārya-Brahman or Hiraṇyagarbha.[13] Śaṅkara is discussing not gradual release, but release consequent on *Brahmajñāna* which is attainable here and now. And for even such released souls, persistence of individuality is held not only as possible by Śaṅkara, but necessary in the interests of what is called *lokasthiti.* In other words, the world will persist as long as there are souls subject to bondage. It terminates only when all are released, i.e. absolute salvation is possible with world redemption.

Such a view of Śaṅkara's philosophy is by no means new. Appaya Dīkṣita, for example, takes his stand on those passages in Śaṅkara where the Jīva is said to be of the nature of Īśvara and not Brahman, and holds

[12] *Ibid.,* III.3.32.
[13] These attain liberation when the office of Hiraṇyagarbha terminates.

that the liberated individuals attain communion with Īśvara and not union with Brahman. 'The Self of the Highest Lord is the real nature of the embodied self' (*B.S.*, III.4.8), and so he contends that Śaṅkara supports the view of *mokṣa* as attaining the nature of Īśvara. He also suggests that when all the Jīvas attain liberation, the world, with the liberated souls and Īśvara, lapses into the Absolute where there is neither subject nor object, neither world nor God. But so long as some souls are unredeemed, even the liberated are in the world, which is governed by Īśvara, though filled by the spirit of oneness of all, and fulfil their redemptive functions.

That the individual does not become identical with Brahman but only with Īśvara comes out from what is called the theory of reflection or Bimba-pratibimbavāda. When a face is reflected in a number of mirrors, the destruction of a particular mirror means only the lapse of the image into the reflecting face and not the face in itself. It is only when all reflection ceases, i.e. when all mirrors are destroyed, that the reflecting face disappears and the face in itself appears. The full release or the attainment of Brahman is possible only when all *avidyās* are destroyed. Until then, release means only identity with Īśvara.

If such a view is adopted, two conditions are essential for final salvation: (1) inward perfection attained by intuition of self; and (2) outer perfection possible only with the liberation of all. The liberated souls which obtain the first condition continue to work for the second and will attain final release when the world as such is redeemed. To be saved in the former sense is to see the Self all in all, to see all things in the Self and to live in the Self with all things. To be perfect is to be onself and all else; it is to be the universe. It is to give onself, so that all might be saved. Commenting on the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* text (III.2.5), Śaṅkara says: 'He who has reached the all-penetrating Ātman enters into the all.' Kumārila in his *Tantravārttika* quotes Buddha as saying: 'Let all the sins of the world fall on me and let the world be saved.'[14]

THE LIBERATED INDIVIDUAL

The liberated individual has the consciousness of the timeless Infinite and, with that as his background, takes his place in the temporal world. He has what the seers called *trikāla-dṛṣṭi,* an intuition of time in which past, present, and future exist together for ever in the self-knowledge and self-power of the Eternal. He is no more swept helplessly on the stress of the moments. He lives in the consciousness of the universal mind and works for the welfare of the world in an unselfish spirit. True renunciation is not abandonment of action, but unselfish conduct.

[14] See the writer's *An Idealist View of Life* (George Allen & Unwin, London), Ch. VII.

VII

While the sayings of Sri Ramakrishna did not penetrate so much into academic circles, they found their way into lonely hearts who have been stranded in their pursuit of pleasure and selfish desires. Under the inspiration of this great teacher there has been a powerful revival of social compassion. Educational and medical work is done throughout the country. He has helped to raise from the dust the fallen standard of Hinduism, not in words merely, but in works also.

March 1937

EDITORS' PREFACE

INDIA's cultural heritage is not only one of the most ancient, but it is also one of the most extensive and varied. To it have contributed, throughout the ages, many races and peoples, who have either temporarily come into contact with India or have permanently settled within her borders, joining the ranks of her children and helping to evolve a distinctive Indian culture, the keynote of which is synthesis on the basis of eternal values. The present volume digs deep into the past and reveals to our view the prehistoric glimmerings of this culture in the admirable Indus valley civilization which flourished over 4,000 years ago. It gives us glimpses of the Vedic civilization when the grand spiritual foundations of Indian culture were laid, and of the Jaina and Buddhist movements which tried to spread the accumulated spiritual wealth among the masses and classes of the country and, the latter, also abroad. Thus the foundations of the two great ideals of India—Synthesis of Cultures and Spiritual Regeneration of Man—have been truly laid in these early phases on which the future structure of India's culture has been raised.

THE STAGE FOR THE DRAMA OF INDIAN HISTORY AND CULTURE

The nine articles in the first two Parts of this volume—Part I dealing with 'The Background of Indian Culture', covering geographical, racial, linguistic, and cultural aspects ; and Part II dealing with 'Prehistoric India', covering Stone Age and Indus Valley civilizations, the problem of the Origin of Indo-Aryans, and early cultural relations with outside countries—have sought to indicate how the stage was set for the drama of Indian History and Culture to take its course on the subcontinent of India during the last 4,000 years and more. In one of his great poems, *Bhārata-tīrtha* (India as the Great Holy Spot), Rabindranath Tagore expressed, in beautiful language, how different peoples came into India from prehistoric times right down to recent centuries (which brought to the shores of India the modern European peoples) and have co-operated in building up a great culture which does not seek to exclude anything, but is all-inclusive, and does not take up an attitude which would deny to any people its right of self-expression. As a matter of fact, the great culture of India is basically a Synthesis—a synthesis of not only blood and race, but also of speech and

of ways of thinking (of which the different speeches are the outward expression) as well as of cultures—material, intellectual, and spiritual—which give ideologies and determine attitudes and actions. The geographical background is also to be taken into consideration, because Man, in any area of the world, is a product as much of his geographical and economic environment as of his racial and cultural bearings and moorings.

No culture or civilization has come into being in any country, and at any age, in a completed and a perfected form, like an Athena coming out full-grown and fully-armed from the head of the Divinity, Zeus. There has always been an evolution in the development of Man and his surroundings—Man is for ever *becoming*; and like all things mundane, his affairs are ever in a state of flux.

INDIA—A UNITY IN DIVERSITY

India represents a remarkable diversity out of which a unity has developed. Some would prefer to describe it the other way, as the expression of a basic and original Unity in its various manifestations. This other way of looking at the matter has something attractive in it for those who believe in a progressive degeneration from a Golden Age of their imagination, rather than in a sequential evolution through the ages. But, in the face of observed facts, it is a case of a unity gradually becoming established out of diverse, and often contending, elements. It began, of course, with diversity, considering that the country presents a most remarkable array of geographical and climatic and attendant economic features, and that the first human habitants of India represented various different races whose origins and whose languages and basic cultures, to start with, were distinct from each other.

GEOGRAPHICAL VARIETY

In India we have in the Himalayan regions a climate which is as temperate as that of the greater part of Europe. There are dry sandy deserts which rival the deserts of Arabia. There are areas which display extremes of cold and heat in some of the seasons of the year and do not have any appreciable rainfall. And these areas breed a type of people who would naturally be quite different from those who live in the moister areas where there is more frequent rain than elsewhere. There are mighty alluvial plains and riverain tracts stretching for hundreds and hundreds of miles which are exceedingly fertile and which have largely made for the wealth of the country that is based on agriculture. There are high plateaus and wooded hills which also nurture other types of people. There are coastlands which have attracted people to maritime adventuring. All these

variations in climate and land-structure also help to bring about a most remarkable variation in the background of life, and in the life itself. Food and dress habits, as well as use of materials, styles of house-building, and ways of living, both domestic and social, have to be different, according to the background presented by Nature.

RACIAL DIVERSITY

Then the peoples who came to India represented various racial types; and with the material at our command, it has been attempted to appraise the different types of Humanity which came to be established on the soil of India, and how they reacted towards one another. The present work is concerned more with the mind and the spirit than with the body and the physical environment of the people of India—how they were enabled to think and act and find out for themselves a consistent world of ideas and of behaviour which have their value not only for the Indian Man, but also for the whole of Humanity. Consequently, it is not so necessary to dilate upon the physical bases and aspects which came to characterize Indian life and civilization in the different areas within the country. The great fact remains that peoples of diverse origin came to the country at different times, and they settled down beside one another; and entering into a sort of great understanding or comprehension amongst themselves, they jointly built up the culture we are accustomed to associate with India: they built up 'the Wonder that is India'.

EVOLUTION OF INDIAN WAY OF LIFE

The articles mentioned above do not give the whole picture; as a matter of fact, considering the vast amount of lacunae in our knowledge of India in the formative period of her culture, it will not be possible for us to obtain the full picture. Out of a welter of race-movements and of ideological exchanges, ferments, and equillibria, we can only see dimly the gradual establishment of a way of thought and a way of life that became associated with India as a distinct entity among geographical units and human *enoses*. The various races follow each other as a phased sequence, or sometimes they tumble upon each other's heels throughout the centuries and millennia, making ultimately for that richness of life and experience and thought and spiritual perspective that are in the civilization of India: the eolithic Negroids from Africa; the Proto-Australoids and the Austric peoples, probably from Western Asia; the Mongoloids from the Far East, in their various ramifications; the congeries of the Asian peoples who appear to have brought the Dravidian language and culture into India; the Indo-Europeans in their various elements, racial and linguistic—not

only Nordic, but also Mediterranean, Alpine, and Dimaric in race as well as language; Aryan—both as Indo-Aryan and Iranian—as well as Proto-Hellenic and historical Hellenic; and other various races and peoples, too numerous to mention even for the prehistoric period only.

History has forgotten, or there is want of recorded history, about at least some of these ancient races who have merged into the Indian people without leaving much trace. In historical times, other peoples also came, of whom we have plentiful records: the Assyrio-Babylonians, the Ancient Persians, the Greeks, the Scythians, the Parthians and other Iranians, the Turks, the Muslim Persians, the Armenians, and the modern West European peoples like the Portuguese, the French, the Dutch, and the English; possibly a backwash of the Polynesians; besides, Elamites, Finno-Ugrians, and some others. Sometimes they were quietly absorbed into the basic racial and cultural mixture that was going on—it was becoming a chemical compound and not a mechanical mixture. But there might have been, and as a matter of fact there have been, others who had already formed their own spirit of resistance, and so could give their impress, and added new elements to the culture that was being built up through unresisting co-operation; and in this way they strengthened or enriched the basic culture of India. Sometimes a kind of intransigence was noticeable; and this has given rise to problems due to mutual exclusiveness, which has still to harmonize itself with the general spirit of India—with an *Indianism,* or common Indian way of life and way of thinking, which has grown up.

ANTIQUITY OF INDO-ARYAN CULTURE

The Indian way of life, as it emerged with the birth of *the Indian Man,* which took place as the result of miscegination of Niṣāda and Kirāta, and Dāsa-Dasyu and Ārya, i.e. of the Mongoloid and the Austric, the Dravidian and the Indo-Aryan or Indo-European (possibly with other ethnic groups about which we have no sure or positive evidence now), was a comparatively late thing in the history of Man. We have to bid good-bye to theories of hoary antiquity for Indian Aryan culture, which we in India generally look upon as axiomatic. As it has been discussed in some of the papers in this volume, we might look upon the tenth century B.C., the last phase of the Vedic age, as the time when *the Indian Man* came into being. The beginnings of the Vedic Period may go back to the fourteenth or fifteenth century B.C., and outside India, in Iran and in Northern Mesopotamia, to a time when the pre-Vedic Aryan or Indo-Iranian language was current. From the Mitannian and other documents, we have glimpses of the pre-Vedic and pre-Avestan language as it was in use round about 1500 B.C.

INFLUENCES FROM THE NEAR EAST

The second half of the second millennium B.C. was a period of large-scale tribal movements and racial disturbances throughout the whole of the Near East, touching also the fringes and sometimes the heart of India. In Vedic India of before the tenth century B.C., we have, it is exceedingly likely, some echoes of these racial movements. Harit Krishna Deb has shown in a significant article, which he contributed to the *Festschrift W. Geiger*,[1] that certain Mediterranean and Asia Minor peoples, who were Indo-Europeans, appear to have come to India and participated in local politics and local wars, as much as peoples like the Greeks (and with them a few other Europeans like Germanic Goths) appear to have come to India in the centuries round about Christ. The Egyptian documents of about 1200 B.C. mention a number of tribes who had come from beyond the seas into Lower Egypt, and their names are given in Egyptian documents as *Śklś*, *'kwś*, *Trś*, and *Wśś*, and these names with the vowels added have been read respectively as *Shakalsha* or *Shakarsha*, *Akawasha*, *Tursha*, and *Washasha*. Three of these names are those of tribes well known in the Near East a thousand years before Christ—the Sikeloi or Siculi, i.e. the Sicilians; the Akhaiwoi or Akhaioi or Achivi, i.e. the Achaeans or Greeks; and the Tyrrhenoi or Tursci, i.e. the Tuscans, who have been often mentioned by Greek and Latin authors. Of these, the Tuscans were not, of course, Indo-European.

In the well-known Ṛg-Vedic hymn (VII. 18), describing the battle fought by the Indo-Aryan king Sudās with a confederacy of 'Ten Kings' who attacked him, we find the following tribes mentioned in the same context as being with the enemies of Sudās. They were the *Śigru*, the *Yakṣu*, and the *Turvaśa*. Harit Krishna Deb has suggested with great plausibility that the tribes mentioned in the *Ṛg-Veda* were the same as those mentioned in the Egyptian documents; only the *Tursha* and the *Washasha* from the Egyptian documents appear to have been combined into one tribe, probably confederated or united, as *Tur-vaśa*. This would suggest that extraneous influences from the Near East were not absent even in the initial period of India's emergence as a characterized cultural unit. Harit Krishna Deb has also suggested that there were, similarly, other groups of people—at least two of them—who might have come from the Near East, like the *Pulastis* and the *Kapardins*. Deb would identify the former with the people known to the Egyptians as the *Purasati* (who were the same as the Philistines of Palestine) and the latter with *Keftiu*, a people from Crete (the ancient Egyptian name being modified by the Jews as Kaphters).

Less convincing, but nevertheless noteworthy, is Deb's proposal to

[1] Leipzig, 1931.

identify some kings mentioned in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (XIII.4.3.9) with rulers who lived and flourished in the seventh century B.C. in the lands of the Near East. A king named Arbuda Kādraveya is sought to be identified with the ruler of some peoples of ancient Iran like the Arbitai in Gedrosia—Arbuda being connected with Arbitai and Kadru (the source of the metronymic Kādraveya) with 'Gedro-' in Gedrosia—and with peoples further to the west like the Elamites. A king Asita-dhanva has been equated with Esarhaddon, the Hebrew form of the Assyrian name Ashur-akhi-iddina, who ruled over Assyria from 680 to 668 B.C. The name Matsya-Sammada is connected with a name like Mushezib-Marduk, a king of Babylon known to the Greek geographer Ptolemy as Mesesimordakos, who ruled in Babylon about 692 B.C. And a king Tārkṣya Vaipaścita, i.e. 'Tārkṣya the son of the Wise One' is suggested to be the same as Tarku in ancient Egyptian (or Tirhaka in Hebrew, and Tearkon in Greek), who was the king of Egypt and Ethiopia in the early seventh century B.C., whose immediate predecessor—possibly his father—was known as 'the Wise One' in Egyptian documents. These identifications may not be wholly tenable; but they are very suggestive, and would go to show, if they at all are admissible, that the Indians, at least in North India, knew something about the names of the more important sovereigns of the Near East in the seventh century B.C.

ANTIQUITY OF VEDIC SANSKRIT

Until recently it was generally admitted that Vedic Sanskrit was the oldest Indo-Aryan language. Then came the Boghaz-köi documents which gave us some inklings of the pre-Vedic age of Aryan migrations in Northern Mesopotamia in the fourteenth century B.C. Finally, the Hittite question came before us, and it is now admitted that the discovery and reading (by the Czech scholar, the late B. Hrozny') of the language of the Hittites (the Kanisian speech) has brought for the history of Indo-European an earlier vista. The recent researches of two English scholars, Michael Ventris and John Chadwick (systematically published in their *magnum opus, Documents in Mycenean Greek*),[2] have thrown unexpected light upon the history of pre-Homeric Greek. Greek can now be taken back to several centuries before Homer, back to the fourteenth century B.C. In the late Aegian inscriptions in linear writing, which have only recently been read by the above scholars, has been disclosed the flourishing state of Greek as a written language—although with a very imperfect system of writing—as far back as 1400 B.C. This would make the ancient Greek language anterior to the Vedic by at least a couple of centuries. These are very intriguing facts

[2] Cambridge University Press, 1956.

which are coming to light, and they will have their repurcussions on our researches into the oldest phases of India's culture.

'AXIAL PERIOD' OF HUMAN CULTURE

But it does not matter at all that, if compared with ancient Sumer and ancient Egypt and possibly also ancient Asia Minor, our culture as a composite is not so old. But it has an ideology which is of universal appeal and value. In the history of Humanity as a whole, the first thousand years before Christ has been described as the 'Axial Period'. During these thousand years, the nations of antiquity which flourished at that time, or rather their intellectual and spiritual leaders, gave expression to certain ideas, certain intuitions with regard to the nature of the Unseen Reality, and also with regard to our relations with it, which are still vital for Humanity, and round which also the mind of modern man in his gropings to grasp at the Unseen Reality is still revolving. It is the ideologies which developed in China, in India, in Iran, in Mesopotamia, in Palestine, and in Greece that furnish the axis for modern thought—the living religions of the world.

Man, after he had become a civilized being and made life possible, and to some extent secure and comfortable, began to think seriously about the problems connected with life—particularly about the Great Guiding Force of Life and Being. It was arrived at by the deeper and the finer consciousness of Man when he had sufficiently advanced in civilization; it was not merely the promptings of fear and wonder which lay at the root of primitive religion. Man made this great discovery for himself that behind life and existence there is a great Force, a great Presence, which has been viewed differently by different groups of men, conditioned as they were by their economic and cultural background. They discovered, as in India, the *Ekaṁ Sat*—'The One Single Existence That Is'; and the Indian sages also said that the wise men, evidently in the different societies, described it in a manifold way.

It was to be the Axial Millennium with Humanity as soon as they had arrived at a postulation of this great Unseen Reality behind Life, and mankind as a whole became convinced of it. This was conceived as a unique Force which had to be obeyed without question and which would not tolerate man's homage to be paid to any other lesser conception: that was the Hebrew attitude—the attitude of the Old Testament prophets.

Behind this monistic idea of the Jewish prophets was the conception of *Aten* as arrived at by the philosopher-king of Egypt, Akhen-Aten (Amenhotep), who saw in that Force the Lord of Light and of Guidance as manifested in the material sphere by the Sun.

In China, the conception of *Tao* or 'the Way', through which everything in this world is carried under an inevitable Law, was early arrived at, and it is the basis of all deeper religious thought in China, not only of Taoism, but also of Confucianism ; and connected with the *Tao* concept is the great principle of *Yang* and *Yin*, i.e. of Light and Darkness, or the Positive and the Negative, or Heat and Cold, or Sky and Earth, or the Male and the Female—of Puruṣa and Prakṛti, in Indian parlance.

In India, possibly based on certain conceptions which worked already in the minds of pre-Aryan peoples, the great concept of Brahman or the Supreme Spirit, a kind of *Mana* (as the Polynesians named it), which is both transcendent and immanent (*kaṭa-v-ul*, as it has been called by the ancient Tamil sages of South India—'That which is beyond, and also within') in our mundane existence, was arrived at ; and along with that went also the great concept of a Moral Order in the universe, which was analogous to the Chinese *Tao*, and came to be known to the Vedic people as *Ṛta* or the Supreme Truth, or as *Dharma* in later times, meaning 'that which holds things in itself, and represents their true nature'.

The conception of the Spirit as opposed to Matter (the latter being identical with Energy or Force—Prakṛti being the same as Śakti) also came to be developed in India, possibly before the Axial Period, or at its juncture. This had its bases in certain concepts like that of the Unseen Reality as the Great Mother of the Universe which developed in the Near East before the Axial Period.

During this Axial Period, thinkers tried to rise above the imagination of Voodoo or Mumbo-Jumbo of sacrifice and religious ritual as the only means of appeasing or compelling the Ultimate Reality conceived in these and other forms. They tried to find out a rational and a civilized interpretation of all the ways of God with Man, i.e. of the relationship between the Ultimate Reality and mankind and also the world around. From their thoughts and concepts arose the great philosophies and the great religions—Taoism in China ; the Vedānta in India, with its insistence upon knowledge or faith or good deeds or self-culture, rather than upon dry and barren ritual ; the attitude of the Buddha that the Supreme Truth was to be attained by true wisdom going hand in hand with self-discipline and universal love and charity ; the idea of Zarathushtra in Iran, which looked upon a conflict between Light and Darkness, between Good and Evil, as the vital drama in existence, and regarded the Unseen Reality as the Spirit of Good which for ever fights with the Spirit of Evil—Ahura Mazda versus Angra-Mainyu—, and held that it is the duty of Man to be a soldier in the cause of the good against evil. We have also the ideas of Socratic and Platonic philosophy which are essentially based on a faith in the Unseen

Reality and in Man's duty to live a life of moderation and of wisdom. We have also at the other end the teaching of Christ, which, with certain Hebraic concepts in the background, is essentially that of love of God and Man; and this love for Man which has been proclaimed by Christ was already insisted upon by the Buddha and by Mahāvīra (the founder of Jainism in its historic form) five centuries earlier in a much more extensive and all-comprehensive manner by including all living creatures within the scope of man's loving solicitude.

II

Swami Vivekananda had great love for the propagation of the study of Sanskrit, especially the Vedas and the Upaniṣads. The present volume, with a section on Vedic Civilization dealing with the Vedas and the Upaniṣads, may be deemed a partial realization of Swamiji's cherished desire.

In the scheme of the multi-storeyed temple of learning exhibiting the numerous facets of the different aspects of the cultural heritage of India on its different storeys, the present volume, dealing with 'The Early Phases' of Indian culture, serves as the foundation on which the magnificent superstructure is reared up. And in it, the Vedic civilization occupies a respectable position. Written by acknowledged experts, the articles on the Vedic civilization represent the quintessence of the long-standing study of the different aspects of the subject and will go a long way in creating and stimulating interest in Vedic study and research. The eleven articles comprising the section cover a wide field and throw a flood of light on the various facets of the Vedic civilization, such as religion and philosophy, culture and society, rituals and other auxiliary sciences (Vedāṅgas), and meditation and mysticism.

It is too much to expect these articles to provide an 'open sesame' to all the problems with which the particular topic dealt with bristles, nor is it possible to do adequate justice to the vast and manifold scope of the subject in the space that could be provided in the volume. But there can be no two opinions about the utility and value of the present series of articles which will hold a place of honour in Vedic studies.

MODERN VEDIC STUDIES

The modern period in the history of the Vedic studies may be said to have been inaugurated nearly a century and a half ago when Colebrooke published his monograph 'On the Vedas, or Sacred Writings of the Hindus'. The field of Vedic research has since then been so enriched by a good collection of critical editions, translations, dictionaries, grammars, bibliographies,

indices, concordances, lexicons, monographs, and several other works, besides innumerable articles in research journals, that perhaps no other branch of Indology offers such a vast and varied reference material and tools of research. Though much has been done there is still scope for further research in the domain of Vedism.

ṚG-VEDA AND THE INDUS VALLEY CIVILIZATION

The *Ṛg-Veda* was hitherto regarded as the fountainhead of everything Indian, the repository of the essence of Indian culture: the source of philosophical ideas and religious beliefs, of cultural life, of code of conduct, and of all the sciences was traced to the *Ṛg-Veda*. With the discovery of the protohistoric civilization in the Indus valley thirty-six years ago, the pendulum has swung the other way. The discovery has affected the antiquity and prestige of the *Ṛg-Veda*. Not only much of what is found in the religious practices as also in the material culture of India is now traced to the protohistoric people of the Indus valley, but the Vedic Aryans have been associated with the destruction of the civilization of the Indus valley. The Vedic deity or war lord Indra is said to be the commander of the invading Aryan forces, and his epithet *puraṁ-dara* (sacker of the city) is explained as having been applied to him on account of his wholesale destruction of the Indus cities.

The dating of the Indus valley civilization has been changing with the corresponding changes in Mesopotamian chronology. The 'carbon 14' tests at the pre-Harappan site of Mundigak in Afghanistan tend to ascribe to the Harappā culture a period not earlier than 2500 B.C. The recent view is to place the Harappā culture between 2500 and 1500 B.C. The Aryan invasion of India is said to have occurred not before 1500 B.C. Thus a contact is sought to be established between the topmost layers or the last phase of the Indus valley civilization and the entry of the Aryans into India.

There is, however, no positive or conclusive evidence to connect the Vedic Aryans with the excavated cultures subsequent to those of the Indus valley. The Painted Grey Ware Culture, which is found superimposed on the Harappā culture, is said to have been associated with the Aryans, and they are said to be the people of the Cemetery H at Harappā. So far archaeological excavation has yielded nothing of the nature of sacrificial implements or other ritual paraphernalia that can definitely be called Aryan and associated with the Vedic Aryans, though it must be admitted that the Painted Grey Ware Culture has been found at all excavated sites connected with the Bhārata war. The recent archaeological excavations at Hastināpura have corroborated the Paurāṇic statement about the desertion of the capital in the post-Bhārata war period on account of its being washed away

by the Gaṅgā, by showing flood deposits on occupational layers at Hastināpura, and have thus enhanced the credibility of the other statements in the Purāṇas. The occupational levels of the Painted Grey Ware Culture at Hastināpura have been placed between *c.* 1100 B.C. (or earlier) and *c.* 800 B.C. Even if we assume some connection between the Painted Grey Ware Culture and the Aryan culture at the period of the Bhārata war, there is still uncertainty regarding the chronology of the Bhārata war and the *Ṛg-Veda*, and consequently in fixing the chronological position of the Indus valley civilization and the *Ṛg-Veda.*

Another important factor to remember in connection with both the Indus valley civilization and the *Ṛg-Veda* is that in both cases we do not possess the entire material. It has not been possible to reach the lowermost strata in the Indus valley and get particulars about the origin and antecedents of the Indus valley civilization, nor are full details available of the topmost levels relating to the civilization, much valuable material having been used in the construction of the track for the North-Western Railway in the last century. The extant Vedic literature represents but a part of the entire literary output of the period, and this should be borne in mind, especially when drawing conclusions from arguments *ex silentia.* Under these circumstances the last word in the matter cannot be said to have been pronounced. Unless excavations present strata containing antiquities definitely associated with Vedic culture, superimposed on layers of the Indus valley civilization, or unless universally accepted decipherment of the Indus script furnishes some definite clue, the priority of the Indus valley civilization to the *Ṛg-Veda* cannot be said to have been definitely established.

Renou has stated that the Indus civilization appears to owe nothing to the Veda, nor does the Veda appear to owe anything to it, and that 'the Aryan tribes may well have overrun it without in any way being influenced by it, settling on the ruins of a decayed or decaying empire'.[3] On a comparison between certain Ṛg-Vedic hymns and some seal-designs and statuettes from the Indus valley, Ramachandran finds the latter 'to be embodiments of the fancies of the Rig-Vedic poets'.[4] In the portrayal of the three-headed bull, with its characteristic dewlap, he discovers the representation of the past, present, and future stages of time. Ramachandran regards the *rhinoceros unicornis* to be the Vedic *varāha* or *yajña-varāha* which, he says, is not to be equated with the wild boar or pig. He identifies the statuette of the shaven-headed figure wearing trefoil-patterned garment with *yajamāna* (sacrificer), and associates the toy cart with the carrying of *soma* plants into the sacrificial hall during the course of sacrifices. According to Rama-

[3] *Religions of Ancient India,* p. 3.
[4] *Presidential Address, Section I, Indian History Congress, Agra, 1956,* p. 9.

chandran, 'The minds of the Rig-Vedic people and the Indus valley people appear to have thought out on the same lines, as much in accepting animals, birds, and human beings as they are in realistic study as in integrating them into *āveśas* or "chimeras". . . . The Rig-Vedic *poet* and the Indus valley *artist* have fancied and fashioned alike'.[5] Without entering the controversy as to the chronological position of the *Ṛg-Veda,* it may be worth considering whether the culture of the *Ṛg-Veda* and that of the Indus valley are incompatible. It may be argued that the *Ṛg-Veda,* in some respects, represents an earlier phase of the culture found in the Indus valley, which shows a synthesis and fusion with non-Aryan elements. The Vedic culture, in its wake, was also influenced by the Indus valley civilization and the mingling of these different cultures culminated in composite Hinduism.

ANTECEDENTS OF THE VEDIC ARYANS

In order to understand the cultural background of the Veda we should take note of the antecedents of the Vedic Aryans. According to the view now commonly accepted the primary Urheimat of the common Indo-European stock was located in the Ural-Altai region. Leaving their original home some tribes migrated towards the south-east and settled down in the region around Balkh. During their long stay here, these Aryans, ancestors of the Vedic people and the ancient Iranians, developed the Aryan language, the parent of the Vedic and the ancient Iranian, and the Aryan religio-mythological thought, the source of the religion and mythology of the Veda and the Avesta. Later, during further migrations among these Aryans, peaceful tribes among them moved to the south-east and settled in what was later called Iran—Āryāṇām = (land) of Aryans—, while the warlike ones advanced towards the Sapta-Sindhu, and these were the immediate forefathers of the early Vedic people. The mythico-religious concepts of the Vedic Aryans covered the cosmic worship and the fire worship, which were shared by them in common with the Indo-Iranians, as also hero worship which they had evolved in course of their victorious advance. The *mantras* of the Vedic people thus revolved round these three aspects of their religion. These antecedents of the Vedic people also explain the peculiar attitude of the European scholars about the value of the traditional interpretation which they reject in favour of modern interpretation on the basis of comparative philology and other material.

PRESERVATION OF THE TEXTS OF THE VEDAS

The preservation of the entire text of the *Ṛg-Veda* intact by oral transmission throughout centuries is a unique phenomenon in the annals

[5] *Ibid.*

of world literature. This preservation of the text without corruption was ensured by introducing at least five modes of recitation of individual *mantras* from the *Ṛg-Veda*: (i) The *saṁhitā-pāṭha* (continuous recitation) was the normal text governed by the rules of metre and rhythm. (ii) In the *pada-pāṭha* (word recitation) each word in the Saṁhitā-text was recited without *sandhi* (compound) in its own specific accent. (iii) The third was the *krama-pāṭha* (step recitation), where each word of the *pada-pāṭha* was recited twice, being connected both with what precedes and what follows, e.g. ab, bc, cd, etc. (iv) The *jaṭā-pāṭha* (woven recitation), which was based on the *krama-pāṭha,* recited each of its combinations twice, the second time in a reverse order, e.g. ab, ba, ab ; bc, cb, bc ; etc. (v) In the *ghana-pāṭha* (compact recitation) the order was ab, ba, abc, cba, abc ; bc, cb, bcd, dcb, bcd ; etc. The significance of the complete measure of success achieved by this system in preserving the text from interpolation, modification, or corruption will be realized when we find that in the entire text of the *Ṛg-Veda,* covering 1,028 hymns or about 10,560 *mantras* or about 74,000 words, there is only one variant reading, viz. *maṁścatoḥ* for *māṁścatoḥ* in VII.44.3.

MANTRA OR PRE-SAṀHITĀ PERIOD

During the centuries that elapsed between the composition of the *mantras,* which constitute the beginnings of what later came to be called the *Ṛg-Veda,* and their incorporation in the Saṁhitā-text or codification, the *mantras* were handed down in different families and employed at ceremonies so that they were exposed to considerable change. The present text which is preserved through oral transmission represents a fairly late stage in the development of the *Ṛg-Veda* ; the language is not homogeneous ; several divergent forms, some archaic and some representing the language of the time, have crept in. Tradition has no doubt scrupulously preserved that text, and the unchangeability of the *Ṛg-Veda* after its codification is a fact ; but that the same cannot be said of the pre-Saṁhitā text can be demonstrated by the innumerable variations recorded in the *Vedic Variants* by Bloomfield and Edgerton.

THE ṚG-VEDA

Though tradition knows of several recensions of the *Ṛg-Veda,* only the Śākala recension, which is meant when we speak of the *Ṛg-Veda,* has come down apparently in its entirety, and parts of the Bāṣkala and Vālakhilya recensions. This text, which represents but a late phase of the original *mantras,* as stated earlier, has been to a certain extent regularized and corresponds exactly to the rules given in the Prātiśākhyas. The texts

constituting the *purorucas, nivids,* and *praiṣas* pertain to the pre-Saṁhitā period.

TRAYI AND THE ATHARVA-VEDA

It is interesting to observe the views—sometimes conflicting—held by scholars with regard to the designation of the Vedas as *trayī* (triad, i.e. *Ṛg-Veda, Yajur-Veda,* and *Sāma-Veda*) and the eligibility of the *Atharva-Veda* to be included among the Vedas, some of which have been referred to in the present work. The *Atharva-Veda,* in point of antiquity, stands comparison with the *Ṛg-Veda,* some of its hymns going to the pre-Saṁhitā period as well. According to one view, the *Atharva-Veda* which related to magic, witchcraft, superstition, etc. represented the religion of the masses in contrast to the other Vedas relating to cosmic worship representing the religion of the classes. Another view explains the purpose of the three Vedas and the *Atharva-Veda* to be respectively the attainment of the desired objects and the warding off of the evils, and takes the omission of the *Atharva-Veda* at places where the *trayī* is mentioned as being due to want of necessity or propriety of reference, and not to its inferiority or supposed non-Vedic character, for a large number of highly philosophical hymns occur in this Veda and it shares many hymns in common with the *Ṛg-Veda.*

POST-VEDIC PERIODS

After the Mantra period, representing the beginnings of the Veda and Saṁhitā (collection of the *mantras*) period, come the Brāhmaṇa period, the Upaniṣad period, and the Sūtra-Vedāṅga period, completing the whole range of Vedic literature, there being an interregnum, which witnessed the growth of Jainism and Buddhism, between the last two periods. The Brāhmaṇas, which, along with the *Yajur-Veda,* represent the earliest specimens of Sanskrit prose, were also the earliest commentaries on the Vedas and a repository of ancient legends. The Upaniṣadic period did not represent a spirit of revolt against ritualism, but, as stated by Renou, a natural growth, a supplement to the Brāhmaṇas.

PHILOSOPHY

Beginnings of philosophic speculations are traced right from the *Ṛg-Veda,* not merely in its Tenth Book, but even in the older *Ṛg-Veda,* for instance in III.54.9, where, in the words of Renou, 'we already have a full formation: the single original principle, and the realm of the gods lying between Man and the Supreme Being. Religion and speculation go hand in hand from the very outset'.[8] That the *Ṛg-Veda* anticipates the

[8] *Op. cit.,* p. 8.

doctrine of *māyā* and *rūpa* by employing these terms precisely in their Vedāntic sense is shown by B. K. Ghosh, according to whom the Ṛg-Vedic significance of these terms is respectively 'that occult power by means of which the deceptive appearance can be assumed or discarded' and 'the transient and deceptive *appearance*'. He further wonders how this fact has not yet been properly emphasized by any modern investigator.[7]

The sacrificial system of the Brāhmaṇas has hitherto been excluded by the historians of Indian philosophy from the purview of consideration from the view-point of philosophy. In his *Introduction to Upaniṣads,*[8] Laxman Shastri Joshi has shown that the sacrificial worship in the Brāhmaṇas is responsible for the philosophic contemplation as envisaged in the Upaniṣads ; that the Ātman philosophy has evolved from the worship of several forms of Puruṣa that was in vogue ; that 'the altar-construction was a source of some features of Śaivism' ; that 'the sacrifice was the origin of the Bhāgavata faith called Pañcarātra' ; and that 'we can show a direct connection of Vaiṣṇavism with the sacrifice . . .'.

RELIGION AND MYTHOLOGY

It may be observed in connection with Ṛg-Vedic religion and mythology that the *Ṛg-Veda* faithfully reflects, and is deeply influenced by, contemporary life, so that any changes in the conceptions of mythology are to be viewed in the background of the prevailing conditions. The different concepts in the formulation of Varuṇa and Indra, the eclipse of Varuṇa and the rise of Indra, the inclusion of Aśvins and of Rudra, the ambivalence of divinities and their association in pairs and groups—each of these has a social and cultural background.

Vedic mythology is the complex interweaving of several diverse planes—naturalistic, mythical, and mystical ; ritual, social, and historical ; etc.—ranging between absence of any mythology and complicated symbolism. Though it is contended that the naturalistic interpretation of Vedic mythology sponsored by Yāska and followed by the early school of modern Vedists is not quite adequate, Vedic Nature-worship is undeniable. The exploits and adventures of gods are in part transpositions of natural phenomena to the mythical plane. Some myths undoubtedly record historical facts, and ritualistic approach also cannot be excluded.

This uncertainty of approach, emphasis, and meaning, as also the complexity of the material, has led to several mutually contradictory interpretations of Vedic mythology. As a specimen of the results which modern interpreters obtain on the same set of facts along totally disconnected lines,

[7] *Vedic Age*, pp. 349, 351, f.n. 31.
[8] Pp. 9, 21, 22, 23.

that the different approach pursued by them leads to, reference may be made here to not less than ten different interpretations of Rudra, a minor deity, that have appeared during the last twenty years (since 1938) in a chronological order.

(i) On the theory that the conception of Vedic gods is based on constellatory configurations, Rudra is equated with Sagittarius. (ii) Rudra is taken to be an agricultural deity or a cure deity. (iii) Interpreting the Rudra myth in the light of 'aurora borealis', Rudra becomes the god of the Arctic nocturnal sky of winter combined with the phenomena of storms. (iv) The Rudra conception is explained (a) on physical basis, (b) as '*pons Varolii*' on the cerebro-spinal nervous system, (c) as anticipating the conception of Śiva, and (d) as storm. (v) Rudra was an Aryan deity of solar origin. There is nothing Dravidian in the cult of the phallus, which is Aryan in origin. There is nothing to support a non-Aryan origin for the Paurāṇic Śiva. (vi) The lunar Soma cult in India is associated with ideas of manes, fertility, phallus, . . . storms (of Rudra), priestcraft, . . . (vii) Rudra and Agni represent the same divinity. At least in the *Kṛṣṇa Yajur-Veda*, the word 'Rudra' is used with reference to Agni, or failing it, to some cruel god. (viii) Rudra, properly speaking, is the god of death in Veda. (ix) Rudra may be an approximation to the Aryan god Rudra (Roarer, Father of Maruts, etc.) from an original translation of *Rudhra*, the name of a Dravidian divinity meaning 'red god'. (x) Rudra is identified with Apollo.

This diversity of interpretation brings us to the important question of Vedic exegesis.

VEDIC EXEGESIS

The Brāhmaṇas constitute, as already stated, the earliest commentaries on the Saṁhitās. The problem of interpretation gradually continued to assume complexities and by the time of the *Nirukta* several schools of Vedic exegesis had arisen to which reference has been made in the following pages of this volume. The tradition of interpretation, about which till lately the prevailing impression was that Sāyaṇa was the only commentator of the *Ṛg-Veda* after Yāska, has now been found to be unbroken, uniform, and continuous, right from the Brāhmaṇas up to the present day, through Yāska, Pāṇini, Sāyaṇa, and pre-Sāyaṇa and post-Sāyaṇa commentators. The force of continuity in the tradition can now be maintained; but the multiplicity of methods of interpretation detracts from the value of tradition as the sole repository of the authentic interpretation of the Saṁhitās.

The modern period of Vedic studies, in the early part, had two distinct schools of Vedic exegesis, represented by Roth, Benfey, Grassmann, and

Kaegi, on the one hand, and by Pischel, Geldner, and Sieg, on the other. The former regarded the *Ṛg-Veda* as predominantly an Indo-European document, so that its interpretation demanded the basis of comparative philology and comparative mythology, and consequently traditional commentators were kept in the background as of little or no help. The other school, however, preferred the orthodox Indian tradition represented by Yāska and Sāyaṇa to the modern philological methods as, in their opinion, the Veda is pre-eminently Indian in character and indigenous tradition would enable us to understand the spirit behind the word, linguistics being able to give us the bare meaning alone. At present due importance is attached to traditions of ritual; internal evidence serves as a powerful tool in Vedic interpretation in several ways, e.g. ascertaining meanings of words, supplying lacunae, etc.

In recent times, beginning from Swamī Dayananda Saraswati of the Ārya Samāj, there have been several attempts in India at Vedic exegesis, and reference may be made here only to a few. The attitude of the Ārya Samāj, which claims for the Veda a most scientific character by seeking to establish origins of modern scientific inventions therein, was the result of a reaction to the uncritical and unjust attacks on the Vedas by ill-informed foreigners of the early nineteenth century. According to Sri Aurobindo, the Veda is a mystic and symbolic poetry. The Veda is not full of silly and childish conceptions, nor is it a barbarous and unintelligible hymnery, tedious and commonplace, representing human nature on a low level of selfishness, which amounts to putting our own conceptions into the words of the *ṛṣis*. The Veda symbolizes the passions of the soul and its striving after higher spiritual planes. Coomaraswamy finds the Veda devoid of any historical content and as containing an original metaphysical tradition. Aryans are pioneers not of conquest, but of law and order. Sarasvatī is the mythical river over which a bridge is constructed by *pañcajanāḥ*, joining 'dark world' with 'light world'. R. Samasastry favours astronomical interpretation of Vedic history and mythology.

Needless to add that in the above cases the approach of scholars to Vedic exegesis, whether naturalistic (*ādhibhautika*), mythical (*ādhidaivika*), mystical or metaphysical (*ādhyātmika*), has been influenced by their views regarding the origin and nature of the Veda, which has also largely determined the particular method adopted by them—evolutionary, philological, or traditional.

A few observations seem to be called for in connection with tradition. *Ṛṣis* are said to have received their wisdom directly through intuitive insight. Those that derived their knowledge from others were known as *śrutarṣis*, and with them started the tradition since they had direct

connection with the composers or authors. These *śrutarṣis* later instructed others, and thus arose the tradition of interpretation of the Vedas. Now, direct connection with the author does not necessarily invest the interpretation, which the receiver may put, with authority. Matters were further complicated by there being different traditions for different branches or families, which gave rise to the schools of Yājñikas, Vaiyākaraṇas, Nairuktas, Aitihāsikas, etc. to which reference is made in the *Nirukta*. With these various interpretations, sometimes contradictory, all claiming to have descended from tradition, the question arises as to which of them correctly represents the meaning of the Veda, as all of them cannot be equally true. Traditional interpretation further requires to be strengthened by the evidence of the Vedāṅgas.

Some western interpreters who rely only on linguistics, to the exclusion of the information supplied by tradition, run the risk of indulging in unsound and insecure linguistic speculation. The meanings of words are not invariably to be settled on the basis of grammatical rules alone, but the conventional sense of words has to be accepted in several places when the word has been in vogue pretty long and has acquired a peculiarly distinct sense. On the other hand, it is also equally unsound to ignore comparative philology altogether. The proper course would be to proceed on the joint testimony of tradition and comparative philology and treat them as mutual correctives.

It is somewhat difficult to state what one means by the correct interpretation of the Veda. Naturally, it would be the interpretation which was intended by the seer to whom the *mantra* was revealed. But how are we to know what was the interpretation intended by the author, and who is to judge what was the intended interpretation? The general experience, especially with regard to creative works, is that the correct interpretation is known to the author only at the moment of composition when the inspiration was there. The author himself cannot be always said to supply the correct interpretation at a later period. Not to speak of the Veda, in the case of the Upaniṣads, the *Mahābhārata*, some medieval works, or even some modern works, it is found that several interpretations have been offered. In literary works commentators try to interpret the works by giving various alternative meanings. At times, in order to get over conflicting interpretations, recourse is had to *samanvaya* or reconciliation. That can hardly be said to have been intended by the original author. The aim in interpretation should be to get as near to the intention of the original author as possible.

The widening of the scope and fields of modern knowledge makes severe demands on the equipment of the interpreter of the Veda. He should not

only be conversant with the Veda and Vedāṅga in the traditional way, but also possess an expert knowledge of text-criticism ; comparative philology ; comparative mythology, religion, and philosophy ; ancient history ; anthropology ; archaeology ; Assyriology ; and several other relevant sciences.

RELATION OF THE UPANIṢADS TO VEDAS AND JAINISM AND BUDDHISM

We have already pointed out that the Upaniṣads do not represent a revolt or departure from the general trend of Vedic thought, but a natural growth out of it. This fact is traditionally well recognized, and it is evident in the designation of the two Mīmāṁsās (enquiries into Vedic teachings) as Pūrva- (Earlier) and Uttara- (Later). Most of the grand philosophic insights which we find flowering in the Upaniṣads can be traced back to the Vedic source, at least in germ form. The whole Vedic literature was designed and classified to serve the different ends of men (*puruṣārthas*), with different desires and capacities (*arthitva* and *sāmarthya*), according to fitness (*adhikāra*), at different stages of their life (*āśramas*). The Vedas emphasize the prayer-ritual (*karma*) aspect and secular values (*abhyudaya*), while the Upaniṣads shift the emphasis to mysticism-knowledge (*jñāna*) aspect and spiritual values (*niḥśreyasa*), devotion-meditation (*upāsanā*) being common to both, which links up the two. There is therefore no real conflict between the Vedas and the Upaniṣads.

Similarly, it has been shown in some of the chapters of this volume that the Jaina and Buddhist movements are in accord with the spirit of the Upaniṣads, and in common with them try to reform excessive ritualism and eradicate priestcraft and animal sacrifice.

Thus the Vedic civilization acts as the central core of Indian culture, round which have gathered, in a great synthesis, all the pre-Vedic and non-Aryan cultural elements, on the one hand, and from which have issued forth the later great religious movements, on the other, sometimes chalking out new lines of thought and expression for themselves.

III

The main object of this preface is to explain the background of the thoughtful papers written by learned scholars on Jainism and Buddhism. It has been attempted to give for Jainism, a bare outline of its practices, doctrines, and organization, and for Buddhism, a history of its evolution from its earliest phase to Tāntricism.

The appearance of Jainism and Buddhism in northern India about the seventh and sixth centuries B.C. marks a departure from the trend of Indian religious and philosophical thought as it is to be found in the

Vedas and the Upaniṣads. Both of these systems owe their origin to princes of the Kṣatriya blood and denied the sanctity of the Vedas and the *varṇāśrama-dharma*. It seems that in the region outlying the Brahmarṣi-deśa there was scope for freedom of faith and thought. Besides these two religions, which have a long history, there were a few other religious sects (*vide* pp. 389-99), which were probably short-lived and as such could not leave a literature of their own to posterity. The only sect among these which outlived the other sects was that of the Ājīvikas, whose history can be traced from the days of Aśoka up to the thirteenth or fourteenth century A.D. when it became confined to southern India.[9] But, unfortunately, this sect also has left no literature of its own. Our information about the non-Brāhmaṇical sects is derived mostly from the Jaina and Buddhist sources, in which their doctrines are criticized, and perhaps wrongly represented.

JAINISM—A LIVING RELIGION

Jainism is a living religion today and has a large number of followers, lay and recluse, living mostly in Rajasthan, Gujarat, Mysore, and a few other places. The Śvetāmbara recluses live a corporate life, while the Digambaras prefer to live or move in very small groups of twos or threes. Both of these sects observe strictly the disciplinary rules formulated in their canonical and non-canonical texts. It is rather remarkable that the Jaina monks (*sādhus*) and nuns (*sādhvīs*) still adhere strictly to the injunctions regarding daily life, moral observances, and spiritual practices laid down in a bygone age over two and a half millennia ago. They still travel on foot for going from one place to another, however distant they may be, and never use a vehicle ; and for crossing a river, they may use a boat under certain restrictions. They have a monastic system without a monastery. They move about for eight months in the year, staying only one night in a village, or five nights in a town. For shelter, they dwell in a deserted or vacant house, or in a house vacated by the owner with his permission, failing which they are to live under a tree or in a burial-ground. During the rainy season, they must stay at one place continuously for fifty days, usually in a house vacated by their lay-devotees, avoiding contact with the householders and meeting them only for religious discourses. Such houses are called *uvassaya* (= *upāśraya*), i.e. a monastery. They live by collecting alms, which again must not be kept prepared for them (*uddesiya*). They depend for cloths and other requisites on the lay-devotees. Their daily life consists in study, meditation, collecting alms (if necessary), rendering service to the *ācārya* and *upādhyāya*, reflecting whether any wrong was committed during

[9] *Vide* p. 397 ; also A. L. Basham, *History and Doctrines of the Ājīvikas* (Luzac & Co., 1951).

the day, and so forth. As a matter of fact, their life is wholly based on *ahiṁsā*, which means not only abstention from causing injury to any living being, but also from causing hurt or inconvenience to any person. Fasting and various other physical mortifications, which sometimes are carried to the extreme, are regarded by the recluses as an effective means for spiritual salvation.

The Jaina monastic rules are worked out in detail in regard to ordination, selection of preceptor, rainy-season retreat, articles of use, food and eating, and expiation of offences; some of them have parallels in the Buddhist monastic system.

JAINA LITERARY ACTIVITIES

Jainism kept its activities confined to the borders of India and did not become an eyesore to the Muslim invaders. Its libraries (*bhāṇḍāras*) were built up in different places and did not also attract their attention. The Jaina monks kept up their literary activity in full vigour for centuries, even up to recent times, and produced a number of outstanding poets, writers, logicians, philosophers, and commentators. They have created a voluminous literature in Ardha-Māgadhī, Māhārāṣṭrī, Apabhraṁśa, Sanskrit, and vernaculars and thereby enriched our cultural heritage. Even now, they are writing works in modern Indian languages like Gujarati, Hindi, Marwari, Tamil, Kannada, and Telugu.

The Jaina literature is vast and varied and not confined purely to its religion and philosophy as is the case with the Buddhists. Besides the twelve Aṅgas or Siddhāntas (canonical texts) and corresponding Upāṅgas, there are three other collections called Paiṇṇas (scattered pieces = Prakīrṇas), Cheda-Sūtras (dealing with disciplinary rules), and Mūla-Sūtras (fundamental teachings), and two independent Sūtras, all of which are given canonical importance (*vide* also pp. 418-19).

The Jains also possess an extensive non-canonical literature dealing with logic, philosophy, grammar, poetics, metrics, didactic poems, *stotras*, and lexicography, besides commentaries and sub-commentaries (*ṭīkā*, *vṛtti*, *avacūrṇi*). There were among the Jains many poets who wrote poetical treatises in high flown language, almost as good as high class Kāvya literature in Sanskrit. The Jaina writers have to their credit a few dramas and fictions, mostly religious, as also a number of biographies and story-books, some of which were derived from the Epics. Apart from the popular literature, the contribution of the Jaina writers to grammar, logic, and philosophy is immense. Of the outstanding names, mention may be made of Siddhasena, Śīlāṅka, Abhayadeva, Śāntisūrī, Devendra, and Malayagiri as commentators, and Haribhadra, Hemacandra, and Mallisena as authors of

grammar and logic, and doctrinal and philosophical treatises. The works of Haribhadra and Hemacandra are numerous and of a very high order. The Jaina authors, unlike the Buddhists, wrote also on secular subjects, such as mathematics, astronomy, astrology, and even medicine (*vide* also pp. 401-3).

JAINA PHILOSOPHY

The most comprehensive work on Jaina philosophy is Umāsvāti's *Tattvārthādhigama-Sūtra* of the second century A.D. It has been commented upon by several writers extending over many centuries. There are also other texts dealing with the different aspects of the philosophy. The Jaina philosophy may bear some comparison with the Sāṁkhya, Mīmāṁsā, and Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika systems, but it strikes out a completely different line of thought. In bare outline, it may be said that its two cardinal tenets are Syādvāda (relativity) or Saptabhaṅgī-naya (seven different standpoints), and Nava-tattva (nine substances). By Syādvāda is meant that no single positive or negative statement can be made about anything, not even about the soul, or the *summum bonum*. All objects should be studied from seven standpoints. A boy, for example, grows from the date of his birth and decays from the time of his death, and so no single statement can be made that a boy either grows or decays. By Nava-tattva is meant that there are nine substances, which are as follows: (1) *Jīva* (the conscious soul) functions with the help of (2) *ajīva* (the unconscious non-soul), as mind works through body. Such functions are physical, vocal, or mental, producing (3) *puṇya* (merit) and (4) *pāpa* (demerit), both of which are substances. These two have both (5) *āsrava* (i.e. flow into *jīva*) and (6) *saṁvara* (i.e. stoppage of the flow into *jīva*). The former of the last-mentioned two again causes (7) *bandha* (bondage) by deeds (*karma*),[10] bringing sufferings in one's repeated existences, while the latter effects (8) *nirjarā* (destruction of the effects of deeds) leading one to (9) *mokṣa* (liberation).[11]

CONTRIBUTIONS OF BUDDHISM

In the history of Indian religions, Buddhism occupies a unique place, firstly, for throwing its portals open not only to the Indians of all strata of the society, but also to the foreigners like the Indo-Greeks and Indo-Scythians, who settled in India, and secondly, for its propagation in foreign countries like Ceylon and Burma, Thailand and Cambodia, Central Asia and China, Nepal and Tibet, and the Indonesian countries, and, ultimately, in Korea, Japan, and Mongolia. Along with the propagation of the religion were introduced in those countries the Buddhist art and architecture, language

[10] For the Jaina doctrine of Karma, *vide* pp. 542 ff.
[11] For a fuller treatment, *vide* pp. 403 ff.

and literature, and, above all, translations of the Buddhist scriptures and the subsidiary literature in the languages of the countries where the religion made its home. In short, the cultural heritage of India was shared by most of the Asians through the grace of this religion.

The career of Buddhism within India was also remarkable for its manifold contributions to our cultural heritage. These may be summed up as follows:

(a) Introduction of a well-organized monastic system based on democracy;

(b) Construction of magnificent cave-dwellings, monasteries, and artistic *stūpas*, surrounded by sculptured railings;

(c) Artistic images of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and other gods (*vide* pp. 518 ff.); and

(d) Scriptures in Pali, Buddhist Sanskrit, Pure Sanskrit, Khotanese, Kuchean, Uigur, Sinhalese, Burmese, Chinese, Tibetan, Japanese, and Mongolian.

BUDDHIST WAY OF LIFE

Buddhism, which was a younger contemporary of Jainism, struck a new keynote in Indian religious life—a course midway between the rigorism of the Jains and the secularism of the sacrificial Brāhmaṇas. It advocated a moderate life for its recluses (*bhikṣus* and *bhikṣuṇīs*) and permitted them to take just enough food and clothing and a shelter to maintain their physical strength, in order to be able to practise concentration of thoughts and to acquire knowledge. It chalked out a well thought out path known as the *aṣṭāṅgika-mārga* (eightfold path), which trained up an adept morally, psychologically, and intellectually.

The daily life of the monks and nuns was regulated by an elaborate code of disciplinary rules embodied in the *Vinaya Piṭaka.* Their mental training and meditational exercises were prescribed in the *Sutta Piṭaka* and elaborated in the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka,* and later systematized by Buddhaghoṣa in the *Visuddhi-magga.* Their programme of studies for intellectual development and spiritual elevation was worked out in detail in the *Sutta Piṭaka.* The main object of their studies was to free their minds of three impurities, viz. attachment (*rāga*), hatred (*dveṣa*), and delusion (*moha*), and to comprehend the three fundamental tenets of Buddhism, viz. momentary impermanence (*kṣaṇika anitya*), absence of soul or non-substantiality (*anātman*), and painfulness (*duḥkha*) due to impermanence of worldly beings and objects. Such comprehension could take place by means of constantly observing the dynamic nature of worldly beings and objects, the origin and decay of which depended on the law of causation (*pratītya-samutpāda*).

The realization of the *summum bonum* (*nirvāṇa*) could be effected by means of either spiritual and intellectual exertions (*paññā-vimutti*, or *pratisaṅkhyā-nirodha*) or by negation of past deeds (*karma*) and mental purification (*ceto-vimutti*, or *apratisaṅkhyā-nirodha*).[12] The theory of Karma on which the Buddha laid great stress received a good deal of attention in the original scriptures and later texts.[13] As regards the conception of *nirvāṇa*, there are in the scriptures many passages which, by means of negation of our experiences, tried to elucidate it, but the conception was made clearer and more definite in the later texts.[14]

HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF BUDDHISM

Buddhism retained its original form in Ceylon and Burma, Siam and Cambodia, but went through many transformations elsewhere, some of which still exist in China, Tibet, and other countries. It is proposed therefore to trace here briefly its evolution over a period of 1,500 years.

In the second century after Buddha's demise, during the reign of the Śiśunāga dynasty (414-396 B.C.), the Buddhist Saṅgha became divided into a number of sects (*vide* pp. 459 ff.), some affiliated to the orthodox section called Theravāda, and others to the unorthodox section called Mahāsaṅghika. The latter had their centres in the Āndhra region, for which they were also known as the Andhakas (Āndhrakas). They made substantial changes both in doctrines and disciplinary rules, and paved the way for the advent of Mahāyānism a few centuries later (*vide* pp. 476 f.). The sub-sects of Theravāda were scattered all over India, while the parent sect Theravāda made its home in Central India around Bharhut and Sanchi and went southwards to the borders of India, and ultimately to Ceylon. It had its scriptures in Pali, while its sub-sects adopted both mixed and pure Sanskrit for their literature.

Emperor Aśoka made an attempt to restrain the schismatic tendencies of the Buddhist monks, and was probably able to reduce the number of sub-sects, but could not arrest the tendencies altogether. Some of the sub-sects became very popular in northern and western India and also in countries outside India. The greatest service rendered by Aśoka to Buddhism was the encouragement given by him to the missionaries to spread the message of the Buddha outside India.

During the reigning period of Aśoka's successors and the Śuṅga rulers, the progress of Buddhism had a partial set back but the donative inscriptions on the Bharhut and Sanchi *stūpas* reveal that the religion still had

[12] For a fuller discussion, *vide* pp. 444, 465 ff.
[13] *Vide* pp. 465, 538 ff.
[14] *Vide* pp. 547-58.

many devotees. During the reign of the Śuṅgas, the solidarity of the vast Maurya empire was shattered. In the South (Dakṣiṇāpatha), the Sātavāhanas established their suzerainty. In the eastern part of their dominion, in the Āndhra region, the unorthodox sect—the Mahāsaṅghikas—and its sub-sects made their home, but the patronage of the Sātavāhana rulers was extended not only to them, but also to the orthodox Theravādins and some of their sub-sects. In the North, round about Mathurā and Gandhāra, an important branch of the orthodox sect, known as the Sarvāstivādins, became very influential and was supported by the Indo-Greeks and the Indo-Scythians, of whom special mention should be made of King Menander and Emperor Kaniṣka. It was under the auspices of Kaniṣka that the Sarvāstivādins attained prominence and almost eclipsed the original Theravāda sect by the number of their adherents.

During the first two centuries preceding the Christian era, Buddhism was no longer confined to the monasteries but was brought out from its seclusion to the populace, and this popularization was effected by means of Jātaka and Avadāna literature, in which the ethical teachings were made more suited to the laity, and the *bodhisattva* ideal was held before their eyes. The lay-devotees on their part expressed faith and devotion by constructing numerous *stūpas*, monasteries, and temples of worship, the remnants of many of which still testify to their past glory and magnificence. In those monasteries, they maintained thousands of monks and nuns providing for them ample facilities for study and spiritual advancement. Some of the monasteries became veritable academies thronged by Indians and foreigners. These attracted a number of highly educated sons of Brāhmaṇa families, like Nāgārjuna, Asaṅga, Vasubandhu, and Diṅnāga, who held up the banner of Buddhism for a long time.

During the Gupta Period (A.D. 320-740), Buddhism did not obtain patronage directly from the rulers, except that from Budhagupta and Bālāditya. But this period is marked by the Buddhist literary and philosophical efflorescence, producing outstanding logicians, philosophers, and commentators, and witnessed the full development of Mahāyāna Buddhism, which had two philosophical schools known as the Mādhyamikas and the Yogācāras (*vide* pp. 480 ff.). Both of these schools of thought upheld the oneness (*advaya*) of the universe and the Truth, without any distinction of a subject and an object. Many aspects of their philosophy have a close parallel in Vedānta, though there is the fundamental difference between Buddhism and Vedānta that the former denies the existence of a pure and unchangeable soul altogether, while the latter regards the eternity of pure soul as *sine qua non* of its philosophy.[15]

[15] For fuller discussion, *vide* pp. 559-74.

It is apparent from the accounts of the two Chinese pilgrims, Fa-Hien (A.D. 394-414) and Hiuen-Tsang (A.D. 629-45), that the former found the religion prospering in most of the centres, while the latter noticed its decline with the desertion of monasteries and appearance of non-Buddhist temples. It is evident therefore that from about the sixth century A.D., Buddhism was losing its hold upon the country of its origin, while it was making phenomenal progress in countries outside India. In spite of the patronage of Emperor Harṣavardhana, Buddhism lost its vigour and failed to attract brilliant men who could shed lustre on the religion by their literary productions or dialectical controversies, through which the religion once rose to the pinnacle of its glory.

About the eighth century A.D., there appeared a few distinguished saint-teachers, like Kambala, Indrabhūti, Padmavajra, and Lalitavajra, who evolved a new aspect of Buddhism called Tantrayāna or Vajrayāna (*Vajra* or Thunderbolt implying the Truth, *śūnyatā* or *tathatā*). This new phase fully subscribed to the Mahāyānic philosophy, but prescribed a completely different line of *sādhanā* (spiritual discipline) for attaining liberation. The form of *sādhanā* or the series of duties prescribed are *kriyā* (rites), *caryā* (Tāntric practices), *mudrā* (finger poses), *maṇḍala* (mystic diagrams), *mantras* (spells), *śīla* (moral purity), *vrata* (vows), *śaucācāra* (cleanliness in ritualistic acts), *niyama* (austerities), *homa* (oblations), *japa* (muttering of prayers), and *dhyāna* (meditation), including *haṭha-yoga* (concentration acquired by means of artificial aids).

It is apparent from the list of duties mentioned above that it was an out and out esoteric system and that an adept must have a spiritual preceptor (*guru*) at every step. This esoteric form of Buddhism became well established in India, particularly in the north-western area, and in Bengal and Orissa, where it received the patronage of the Pāla rulers, especially of Devapāla (A.D. 810-50). From these centres, it was transmitted to Nepal, Tibet, China, and Japan.[16] This system, though subtle and effective for attaining emancipation, prescribed certain practices which were liable to be misused by the untrained recruits or misunderstood by the uninitiated. The inevitable happened: more impostors than real seekers of the Truth adopted the system and debased it in the eyes of the common folk. In consequence, Buddhism as a religion went down in the estimation of the Indians and became gradually merged in Śaivism, Hindu Tāntricism, Vaiṣṇavism, and various other cults. However, Tāntric Buddhism flourished in China, Nepal, and Tibet and is still being practised in the latter two countries.

Vide pp. 494 ff.

Buddhism may have disappeared from India, but it has left an indelible mark on our cultural heritage, particularly on language and literature, logic and philosophy, and on moral values. It, however, still prevails as the recognized religion in Ceylon, Burma, Siam, Cambodia, and Tibet and claims a large number of adherents in China, Japan, Korea, Mongolia, and Indonesia.[17]

PRESENT RÔLE OF JAINISM AND BUDDHISM

Jainism, although older than Buddhism, made its influence felt in India from the sixth century onwards, producing a galaxy of scholars, who made substantial contributions to Indian thought and culture. It is still a living religion and plays a significant part in reconciling humanity to lower creation. Its teaching of *ahiṁsā*, i.e. non-violence in deed, words, and thought, formed the basis of Mahatma Gandhi's political philosophy and bears particular importance in the present-day world of tension and nuclear warfare.

Buddhism, though almost extinct in India, has still a great hold on the peoples of Asia. Its contribution to human culture is vast and manifold, covering a period of over 1,500 years. Its aim is universal good, and it is more a humanitarian than a religious movement. Its teaching of amity and compassion (*maitrī-karuṇā*), leading to the ideal of Bodhisattvahood of extreme altruism and self-sacrifice, cannot but bring solace to modern minds of all climes. It may well be regarded as a peace-promoting philosophy, and in this world torn asunder by self-interest, passions, and hatred, it does offer a vista of world-peace. Its teaching is echoed in the political philosophy of *pañca-śīla*, and its *dharma-cakra* forms a part of the emblem of India. Its literature and rational philosophy have roused the interest of many a present-day thinker of Asia, Europe, and America.

UNIVERSAL IDEALS OF INDIAN CULTURE *

We should look upon the Pilgrim's Progress of Humanity as being essentially one. In this Great Quest which mankind has undertaken, ever since Man became conscious of his intellectual heritage, India, in her own way, has made a great contribution. In formulating this contribution of hers, from the very fact of her genesis as a people, she has had to take note of the thoughts and ideas and actions and behaviours of so many different peoples, and take note of them in a sympathetic and an all-embracing spirit; and that is what has given the basic tone or colour to the culture

[17] *Vide* pp. 490 ff.
* This concluding portion is from the pen of Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji.

of India, as representing a Great Synthesis, the philosophical as well as spiritual and the mystical as well as practical expression of which is the sum-total of all the philosophies which developed in India, with the great ideals of the Vedānta looming in the background and even forming the basis. The aspirations and the way of life as proposed by this culture and acceptable to the entire mankind can be tersely put in aphoristic form by a few quotations from early Indian literature:

Ekaṁ Sat ; viprā bahudhā vadanti

'That which Is, is One. Wise men speak of It in many ways.'

Āvir āvīr ma edhi:
Asato mā sad gamaya,
Tamaso mā jyotir gamaya,
Mṛtyor mā'mṛtaṁ gamaya.

'O Thou that art manifest, be Thou manifest to me:
From the unreal, lead me to the Real ;
From darkness, lead me to Light ;
From death, lead me to Immortality.'

Dhiyo yo naḥ pracodayāt

'May He direct our thoughts.'

Sabba-pāpassa akaraṇaṁ,
Kusalassa upasampadā,
Sacitta-pariyodapanaṁ.

'To refrain from all evil ;
To cultivate that which is good ;
To discipline one's own mind.'

Damas-tyāgo'pramādaśca

'Self-restraint, renunciation, and keeping the intellect pure.'

Upekṣā: muditā: karuṇā: maitrī.

'Ignore evil, cultivate graciousness, develop universal love, and do active good to all.'

Calcutta
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PART I

THE BACKGROUND OF INDIAN CULTURE

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THE GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND OF INDIAN CULTURE

IN studying the cultural development of any country, the importance of its geographical factors can hardly be minimized. In the early periods of human history, geography determined to a great extent the lives and activities of the people as well as their thought and literature. Geography shaped history largely then, as it does even today all over the world, though in a different manner. Man has been dependent on the physical facts of nature, but he has not been content to live under its limitations, and he has always striven progressively to break through the barriers placed by nature. The history of India is no exception to this rule. This interplay of the forces of geography and of human will and genius is indeed a subject of great interest, and in this paper an attempt has been made to evaluate the influence of Indian geography on the culture of its people on the one hand, and how the challenge of geography has also been met on the other.

THE PHYSICAL FACTS

The physical facts, which have directly or indirectly influenced the history and civilization of India, have been the size of the country and the comparative isolation or protection afforded by the northern mountain wall, the Himalayas, and the character of the two coasts of the Peninsula; the warmth and rainfall and the character of her soil; and the presence of an extensive alluvial plain in the north, succeeded in the south by a plateau which locally takes the character of steppe or savannah, or of humid mesothermic forest. The whole of this southern plateau is interspersed, at irregular intervals, by rivers which have piled up silt in the form of half a dozen deltas in the coastal regions of the eastern sea (the Bay of Bengal). These deltas constitute parts of the coastal plain which runs all the way from the north to the south of the eastern border of the Peninsula.

The mountain wall in the north is covered at its eastern and north-eastern ends by soft soil irrigated heavily by the summer rains, and which have consequently been clothed by an abundance of tropical and semi-tropical vegetation, even though the region lies well within the temperate latitudes. The northern and north-western mountain chains have a progressively diminishing rainfall, and a thinner cover of soil and vegetation. In the east and north-east, again, the mountain wall is comparatively narrow, and the valleys are young and deep, while water flows in such abundance

in the river-beds as to make them difficult to negotiate. In the western regions, the mountains are not so high, the valleys become wider, and there are dozens of passes through which movements of traders, as well as of masses of men, have taken place over long stretches of historical time.

The extensive plains of the Sindhu and the Gaṅgā were the principal seats of early Indian civilization, while the mountain fastnesses lying to their south and the numerous valleys and deltas in the southern peninsula harboured more ancient, though regional, civilizations, which added powerful and important new strains and thus enriched the totality which is known as Indian civilization of later times. The North has been the centre of great empires like those of the Mauryas or the Guptas; and it has also been the region from which some of the major cultural influences have radiated in various directions. In later centuries, the South, too, developed fairly big and powerful empires, overcoming geographical factors. The South was less open to invasions than the North; and it not only maintained the continuity of Indian culture, but also protected and nurtured it when it faced danger in the North.

The coastline in the west of the Peninsula, with an average breadth of about forty miles, is near a minor mountain chain, namely, the Western Ghats, and it falls abruptly into the sea. There are, at present, only a few points where ports can be favourably situated. These are the regions of the Gulf of Cambay in the north, Goa in the middle, and the ports of Malabar in the south.[1]

The neighbourhood of the Gulf of Cambay lay, in the past, at the sea-end of a road which ran from this point through the highlands of Malwa on to the plains of the Gaṅgā. The ports through which the trade with the western Asian countries and Europe was carried on, in the past, were Broach, Cambay, or Surat. From these points, the north-eastern road followed, roughly, the Chambal or the Betwa valley, often determined by the lay of hill ranges. It is interesting to note that many of the monuments of the Buddhist or Brāhmaṇical sects in ancient India were situated on the two sides of a line which can be drawn to join the end of the Gulf of Cambay with Kanpur in the middle of the Gaṅgā plain. The Ken valley in the east affords a parallel, but less important, road of the same nature from the more eastern portion of the Gaṅgā plain to the middle portion of the northern borders of the plateau.

On the west coast, a rôle comparable to that played by the Gulf of

[1] Early Buddhist texts like the Jātakas and Niddesa works, *The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, a work of the first century A.D., and Ptolemy's *Geography* of the second century A.D., record the existence of many harbours, ports, and market-towns, all along the eastern and western coasts, which were the seats of trade from a very early time between India and the western countries.

Cambay was also played by the region in and near the port of Calicut. This lies at the western end of a road which takes advantage of the Palghat Gap and proceeds eastwards to the fertile plains on the Coromandal coast. Trade of this prosperous region was either focussed at this point, or was carried on by negotiating the northern or southern border of the highlands of Kerala.

The eastern shore of the Peninsula is not abrupt or walled out as in the west; its nature is indeed precisely the opposite. The coastline is formed by flat lands, while the sea is not deep and is broken by heavy surfs. Ships of little more than ordinary size have to stand far out at sea, unless harbours are artificially created as in Madras or Visakhapatnam. Burma, Indonesia, and Thailand had maritime connections with Kaliṅga, Āndhra, and the Tamil-speaking country in the past; and the points of contact by means of small sailing vessels of early times were mostly with the comparatively minor ports which punctuate the eastern coastal plain up to modern times. There was, however, according to the *Periplus*, a very important point of embarkation at the mouth of the Gaṅgā, called Gangé, generally identified with Tāmralipti.

Attention should be drawn at this point to a significant fact in the cultural history of the Peninsula. The main roads from the populous northern plains to the South have lain across the Vindhyas, more or less in the western section of the latter. There was another route which lay along the Mahānadī valley, from the neighbourhood of Banaras, Mirzapur, or Allahabad, through the Chhatisgarh plains, and then along the narrow gorge of the Mahānadī, until it opened out into the delta at its eastern end.

The last route from north to south lay along the eastern coastal plain itself, stretching from the south-western confines of Bengal down to the Kāverī delta in the extreme South. This was a most difficult route in the past, as it was interrupted, at a considerable number of points, by broad rivers which had nearly reached the end of their journey from the western highlands of the plateau to the eastern sea. It is only after the application of modern engineering that passage along the eastern route has become comparatively easy in recent times.

In any case, as the western routes were more important in the past than the eastern ones, and as the rugged nature of the western region of the Peninsula also afforded strategic advantages, we find that many of the kingdoms of the Peninsula had their focal points in the west rather than in the east. The centres of the empire of the Sātavāhanas and the Muslim kingdoms of later times were located more or less in the west. The seat of the Vijayanagara empire was likewise in the same neighbourhood. The eastern zone, on the other hand, was largely a region of comparatively small-

sized kingdoms, which could bask in the sunshine of their comparative isolation, created by the barriers formed by the rivers and the self-sufficiency of its productive system, produced by the alluvial soil and an abundance of rainfall. Nevertheless, the Coḷa and Gajapati empires had their centres in the east, and the Cālukya, Rāṣṭrakūṭa, and Bahmanī empires had their focal points in the centre.

GEOGRAPHICAL INFLUENCE ON CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Culture is a term in anthropology which comprises everything—from the traditional manner in which people produce, cook, or eat their food; the way in which they plan and build their houses; or arrange them on the surface of the land; to social, moral, and religious values which are generally accepted by men, and also habitual methods by means of which satisfaction is gained in respect of the higher qualities of the mind.

The fact that India found it possible to follow a more or less sheltered course of cultural evolution can, to a certain extent, be ascribed to the geographical characteristics of the land. India's geographical position placed her out of the way of the main routes. Further, protected by the Himalayan mountain barriers which permitted only a trickle of the invaders or colonizers, necessitating the submergence of their advance parties in the local population in the absence of constant reinforcements from the rear, India's culture has been preserved through the ages and she was saved from the fate that overtook the ancient civilizations of Egypt and Mesopotamia. Though her insularity made India develop into a distinctive political and cultural unit, her vast dimensions, varied physical features, and variety of climate tended to effect different zones with different racial and linguistic peculiarities and different regional spirits, fostering fissiparous tendencies. Physical features and climatic conditions have affected the lives and habits of the people, influenced their character and make-up, and invested them with distinctive characteristics. In the fertile Gaṅgā valley, for instance, which provided cheap livelihood without struggle, life of ease fostered intellectual pursuits and nature favoured philosophical speculation, resulting in the growth of art, literature, and philosophy. This environment, however, did not foster exact sciences. Those inhabiting the coastal regions became mariners and established trade relations with the world. The residents of different regions, e.g. the Punjabis, Rajputs, Sikhs, Marathas, Bengalis, Gurkhas, Telugus, Tamils, and others, owe some of their peculiar physical and mental characteristics, in a large measure, to the geography of their regions.

Panikkar has invited attention to the peculiar character of the extension of land towards the south, which 'because of the change in climate

following latitudinal differences, always creates problems of integration'. India's geographical factors have somewhat exaggerated these facts. According to Panikkar, despite the unity of India based on Sanskrit language and culture and on Hindu religion and social institutions, geography is constantly trying to assert itself with the result that ethnically and linguistically Deccan and South India still continue to be separate from the North.

But above this diversity, she also developed a large measure of over-all similarity and unity which overcame the limitations set by geography. It is true that travel was comparatively difficult, and isolation more congenial, in ancient times in India. Yet, similarities arose out of migration or diffusion, through trade and conquest, as well as through certain superior forms of intellectual or cultural co-operation.

Whichever be the region we choose in India, whatever the language spoken, or the character of the artistic genius of the locality, we find that culture was more closely oriented to the land than to the sea. There was also considerable unity among the superior elements of culture which existed in the country's numerous geographical regions. And in this tradition, as it gradually took shape in the minds of India's thinkers and artists, three or four geographical facts stand out as having deeply influenced the thoughts and feelings of the men concerned. The rivers, as also the mountains and the forests, with the isolation which they afforded, seem to have exercised an abiding influence on Indian culture, this being deeply reflected in the literature and arts of her people, as well as in many of the acts of her everyday life.

Let us now try to illustrate the above statement by means of some of the traits of Indian culture. As already mentioned, India is a vast country, as vast as Europe without Russia, and is a subcontinent in itself with a wide variety of physical features. She has harboured in her spacious bosom, from prehistoric times, various races and cultures, both immigrant and autochthonous, from the Old Stone Age cultures to those of Austric, Dravidian, Aryan, and Mongoloid. In spite of her vastness and variety, India has always been an integral geographical unity,[2] and the magic spell of her natural unity in the midst of diversity has impressed itself on all these cultures, and on those which came in more historic times, welding them all into a vast synthesis wherein their essential elements have been preserved. The motto of Indian culture has very well been expressed in the Ṛg-Vedic dictum: *'Ekaṁ sad, viprā bahudhā vadanti'*—Truth is one ; sages

[2] Cf. *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, II. 3. 1, which defines India as the land lying north of the sea and south of the Himalayas (*Uttaraṁ yat samudrasya Himādreścaiva dakṣiṇaṁ, varṣaṁ tad Bhāratam*).

call it variously. It will be no exaggeration if we say that the whole history of Indian life and culture has been throughout an amplification of this idea of unity in variety.

We have already referred to the seats of empires which were conditioned by physical facts. But the over-riding fact of India's geographical unity gave rise to an undercurrent of strong urges to realize the political unity of India under one government. The ideal of universal sovereignty (*sārvabhauma, cakravartin, āsamudrakṣitīśa*) was always inculcated in the kings by the political thinkers, and to some extent realized during the Mauryan times. *Āsetu-Himācala,* from the bridge (at the southern tip of India) to the Himalayas, is a very common term in Indian literature.[3] While the geographical unity thus impelled the kings to realize the political unity of India, the vastness of the country has given rise to a feeling of self-sufficiency in the people, to their own detriment, and India has rarely launched on political conquests outside her borders. Her conquests have always been in the realm of culture and religion, and even the kingdoms that she established in South-East Asia partake more of a cultural character. Whereas her fertile lands and immense riches have attracted invasions from outside, India has been content to follow a peaceful policy, trying to absorb the invaders into the body politic and sending out cultural currents far and wide with her own distinctive stamp.

Her rivers sustaining vast masses of population and affording beautiful scenery and cool breeze have created such a sense of holiness about them in the minds of the people, that they have been deified and worshipped. Not only are their sources places of pilgrimage, but their courses have all along been studded with sacred places since very ancient times. The spots where two rivers meet, or where the river joins the sea, are specially holy. The river flowing into the sea reminds the Indian of the individual soul uniting with the infinite universal Soul, shaking off all names and forms (*yathā nadyaḥ syandamānāḥ samudre astaṁ gacchanti nāma-rūpe vihāya*).[4]

The forests too have played a great part in the evolution of Indian culture. We have the literature of the Āraṇyakas, of which some of the Upaniṣads, including the great *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, form a part. At the third stage of life, designated *vānaprasthya,* every Hindu householder was expected to retire to the forest, usually along with his wife. Again, the forests have been the ideal places for the great educational institutions, the *ṛṣikulas* and the *gurukulas.* In the *Rāmāyaṇa,* the *Mahābhārata,* and in later Sanskrit literature, we come across descriptions of many *āśramas*

[3] The bridge is mentioned in the *Rāmāyaṇa* as having been built by Rāma to cross over to Laṅkā (Ceylon) with his army.
[4] *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad,* III. 2. 8.

(retreats or hermitages) of *vānaprasthas* and *ṛṣis* and of educational institutions. The lure of the forest has always been great and deep for the Indian mind. The Buddha, too, practised his austerities in a forest. *Tyāga, tapasyā,* and *tapovana* have always gone hand in hand in Indian culture.

The mountains, again, have exercised a similar effect upon the Indian mind. The snow-clad Himalayas have been described by Kālidāsa as 'the king of mountains (*nagādhirāja*), ensouling divinity (*devatātmā*), who stands between the two oceans as a measuring rod, as it were, of the earth'.[5] They are the abode of Śiva, and Pārvatī is the daughter of the Himalayas. Numerous are the holy places in the region of the Himalayas. From the most ancient times they have attracted pilgrims from all over India, and in their sublime presence people have felt the grandeur and infinity of the pure Spirit.[6] They have been the resort of ascetics and philosophers; they have stirred their spiritual and religious thoughts, and have deeply affected national life and literature. The Himalayas are a natural temple, as it were, and it is probably in emulation of them that many of the temples in India have also been built. The spire of the temple is termed '*Śikhara*' which stands for a peak. The names given to the types of temples, too, are often the names of the sacred mountains of India, like Meru, Mandara, and Kailāsa.

Apart from the Himalayas, there are the seven holy mountains called the *kulācalas*: Mahendra, Malaya, Sahya, Śuktimat, Ṛkṣa, Vindhya, and Pāriyātra.

The Himalayas have not only protected the country from the invasions from the north, but have also sheltered the vast plains of northern India from the icy cold-winds from Tibet and have played a great part in determining the climate of North India. However, with all the blessings conferred by the Himalayas, certain disadvantages have also resulted from the great Himalayan barrier. The isolation of India from the rest of the continent caused by this barrier created a sense of contempt in the Indian mind for the foreigner and made the Indians unconcerned with the rest of the world. There was therefore no development of proper international relations. The Himalayas also engendered a false sense of security from foreign invasion.

The mountains, the rivers, and the forests have thus inspired a love of nature in the Indian mind, which is unique, and is reflected in many aspects of Indian life. Sheltered from the madding crowd, without the distractions

[5] *Kumārasambhava*, I. 1.
[6] *Yasya-ime Himavanto mahitvā*—whose glory the Himalayas proclaim (*Ṛg Veda*, X. 121. 4).

of public life, the mountains and the forests have enabled the Indian thinkers to pursue truth without fear or favour, and the fertile soil and the rich resources of the land have afforded them enough leisure to ponder on problems of existence, to build up lofty philosophical systems, and to create a literature and art filled with the love of God, man, and nature.

The climate, the fertility of the soil, and beautiful and bounteous nature have induced the Indian people to take to agriculture and other peaceful pursuits. The agricultural economy, with the cow as the centre of life, has engendered an affection for the cow bordering on worship. The cow is lovingly called the mother. This love of the cow has further created an attitude of sanctity towards all animal life in general, and has inclined the Indian mind to vegetarian diet and non-violence.

While the abundance of water and the warm climate have created the habit of bathing and simplicity in dress over most of the country, food crops like rice and wheat and spices and betel and areca-nut have determined the habits of food. The flora and the fauna, too, have permeated the national religious life in a very intimate way. Birds and animals are the vehicles of gods and goddesses; the elephant plays a very important rôle in religious processions, and the lotus is frequently used in artistic designs and religious symbolism. It is also to be noted that some of the important feasts and festivals are connected with the seasons and the harvest, and several of the goddesses are vegetation deities.

It is evident that every one of the geographical features of India has thus exercised considerable influence on the life and activities of the people. Because of all these features, in their totality, the whole of India itself has been an object of supreme reverence for the Indian. It is the *puṇya-bhūmi* (sacred land), whose praise the gods sing, and to be born in this land is to be superior to the gods.[7] 'The mother and the motherland are greater than heaven'[8] is the Indian attitude.

The illustrations given above tend to prove that the regions of India, which are today separated by differences of language, share many elements of material and mental culture in common. The distribution of objects like oil or rice, and the use of spices and betel and areca-nut, ceremonial forms of dress and ornaments, and above all the affiliation to castes and religious sects, modes of worship, the approach to life and its problems, the world-view, moral and spiritual values, theological and philosophical views, and artistic traditions, readily cut across the geographical distinctnesses, or the

[7] *Gāyanti devāḥ kila gītakāni dhanyāstu te Bhārata bhūmibhāge,*
Svargāpavargāspada mārgabhūte bhavanti bhūyaḥ puruṣaḥ suratvāt.
—*Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, II. 3. 24.

[8] *Jananī janmabhūmiśca svargādapi garīyasī.*

economic and political isolation of various regions. This implies that a kind of cultural affinity was built up through migration and the diffusion of culture, other than the kind we are accustomed to through the history of the rise and fall of empires.

UNITY OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Whatever may be the significance which we attach to the superstructure of intellectual and emotional elements of Indian civilization, it is necessary at this stage to draw attention to another significant and vital aspect of Indian civilization as it slowly grew up in the course of time. This is with regard to the organization of production which was built up in India in the past.

The character of the productive system of the Vedic peoples is rather inadequately known. There is as yet no archaeological evidence, and the insufficient literary evidence is also open to various kinds of interpretation. But this much is known with certainty that, although portions of the Vedas were left in the keeping of particular priestly families, yet there was no hereditary system of castes, in which members practised complementary professions, generation after generation, as in later times. It is universally agreed that the caste system, with its hierarchy of privileged and unprivileged orders, grew up in later times. The system of planning production in India through hereditary guilds, which were tied to one another by a traditional system of payments in services or goods, was also an elaboration of later times. The caste system is not wholly an organization of trade guilds; but the fact that the system was underlain by a foundation of productive organization outlined above is one beyond question.

In ancient times, when land had not yet become scarce, because the population was low, economic dislocations occurring locally through the unequal growth of various castes could be overcome by migration to unoccupied land, where a replica could be created of the complementary set of castes as in the home territory.

The protection which was thus afforded to the rural population of India was indeed great; while the productive efficiency of the system, which planned both specialized production and equitable distribution in this manner, was so far above the arrangements prevalent in the local civilizations of India that, by and by, the whole of India, residing in her villages, adopted the unity of the hereditary, monopolistic guild system, with its attendant traditions regarding payment through goods and services, and of social status, as the foundation for her social and economic life. Class distinctions of privilege were ignored; political alignments, more or less disregarded; so that, ultimately, the same productive system, built up

perhaps by Brāhmaṇical genius, eventually bound together the whole of India in its protective compass. Perhaps, at the same time, the possibility of adventurousness in economic affairs was thereby hindered. However, this spirit of adventurousness, as observed among the nations of the West, led eventually to the growth of capitalism and of industrial civilization in later times.

India bartered for security, but the security was obtained by industrial and productive backwardness. Conquests and the growth of States which owned land, and lived on rent, gradually introduced new elements into the rural system of production, until the productive organization became marked not only by its inability to cope with famine due to the growth of population, but also by its rigid social inequality and oppression. It is surprising that, even though the backwardness or inequality was accentuated with the passage of time, it did not lead to revolutions of any appreciable dimension. Perhaps the explanation lies not in the doctrine of Karma, but in the fact that the land was fertile, and the economic organization associated with the caste system afforded a measure of security, amidst political turmoils, that kept the people loyal to it, in spite of its obvious limitations. Buddhism, with its consequent release of the Śūdras from the rigours of caste in later times, had an appeal in so far as social equality was a desirable thing for the suppressed classes. But Buddhism had no substitute for the productive organization associated with caste; and the success of the latter perhaps defeated the endeavour to bring about justice and equality at the social level.

It is surprising, though perhaps not entirely unexpected, that even the Muslim population of rural India, as well as the aboriginal tribes who inhabit the hills and jungles of the interior of India, have adopted some of the elements which characterize caste, such as the high status given to certain occupations, in place of others, and the ease and rapidity with which culturally distinguishable communities adopt the custom of endogamy. This attraction of the caste system is there not because Brāhmaṇical rulers have forced it upon communities outside the Hindu fold, but because of the protectiveness and industrial efficiency which were slowly built up, in course of time, in the manner outlined above.

CULTURAL UNITY AT THE UPPER LEVEL

It was on the basis of this economic tradition and efficiency that a new kind of unity grew up between the geographically distinct regions of India. As we have indicated, this over-all unity was a concern of India's thinkers, artists, and also of her saints; and we shall now try to describe how the thoughts and feelings of the former slowly permeated to the lowest level

of the social scale, and how India met the challenge of geography. Although India was, by and large, illiterate, there were built up certain mechanisms by means of which common intellectual and emotional elements of culture could be brought to the door of the most distant communities, isolated either by geographical conditions or by the promotion of social separatism.

One of the outstanding facts of India's educational organization, remnants of which have survived to the present day, has been the rôle played by her wandering mendicants (*parivrājakas*), philosophers who went from court to court, Brāhmaṇical priests, and story-tellers, belonging to several castes, in the dissemination of a common system of traditions all over the land. The *parivrājakas* wandered the country breaking geographical barriers, from very ancient times, even before the time of the Buddha, disseminating their religious views. The organization of the Church, however, resulted from the genius of the Buddha. But when the orthodox sects began to revive, after the initial decay of Buddhism, Śaṅkara built up a new Order which had some significant characteristics. Those who joined the Order of 'Ten Names' (*daśanāmin*) had to cast aside completely their past association, whether derived from family, caste, or region, and had to be born anew. The mendicants were released from their rights and duties as derived from the systems to which they had been hitherto subject. Their caste names were forsaken, and new names were given ending in 'surnames' like *tīrtha,* holy place; *āśrama,* retreat; *vana,* forest; *araṇya,* forest; *giri,* mountain; *parvata,* mountain; *sāgara,* ocean; *Sarasvatī,* the name of a river, also of the goddess of learning; *Bhāratī,* goddess of learning; and *purī,* city. It is interesting to observe that many of these names are derived from natural objects, which have no restrictive connotation about them. The mendicants, who became released from their previous association, thus became un-localized; and they were supposed no longer to have a fixed abode, and, in extreme cases, not even a roof over their head except the sky.

It was the duty of such mendicants to wander from one place of pilgrimage to another, or from one forest- or mountain-retreat to another, as a part of religious discipline. And in the course of such spiritual adventures, some completely retired from the habitations of men, while the majority remained within society and disseminated the ideas or the truths which they had derived from the sacred scriptures, in the light of which they had tried to reorder their own lives.

The custom of reading the holy scriptures, or their vernacular renderings, during some months of the year, in rural India, was also useful in familiarizing the people with stories from the epics—the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*—or the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa.* These readings were often

accompanied with music; and the local open-air dramas, as well as the popular contests between poets engaged in poetical bouts, all had, as their central theme, one or other incident from the same set of legends which the whole of Hindu India shared in common.

Pilgrimages, too, are an important institution in Hindu India. In the *Mahābhārata,* we find the description of the numerous *tīrthas* (holy places) all over the country, and great emphasis is laid on pilgrimage (*tīrtha-yātrā*). Śaṅkara established the four headquarters of his monasteries in places of pilgrimage, at the four corners of India. Dvārakā is situated on the extreme western end of the Kathiawar peninsula; Purī is on the eastern coast; Badarīnārāyaṇa, in the Himalayas; and Śṛṅgerī, in Mysore, near the southern end of the Peninsula. A man who belongs to the Śaiva sect recognizes twelve 'effulgent' *liṅgas* (*jyotirliṅgas*), symbolizing Śiva, situated all over the country. A Vaiṣṇava has similarly his numerous sacred spots; and a Śākta has his fifty-two *pīṭhas,* distributed over the whole of India. It is interesting to observe that the last group of sacred places are supposed to have sprung up in spots where, according to legend, portions of Satī's dead body lay scattered, after it had been sundered into pieces by Viṣṇu, when Śiva was wandering in sorrow over the whole of India carrying her divine corpse. India was thus bound up into one by the Mother Goddess's body itself.

This system of pilgrimage, and the habit of listening to sacred reading, whether in the privacy of one's own home or at the village centre, or the acts of propitiating the gods or the ancestors in holy places all over India, have bound together the whole of India by a deep sense of cultural unity. The love of the mountains and of the forests, punctuated as they are by the retreats of holy men who have renounced the pleasures of life for the higher pursuits of the soul, has become such an integral part of India's intellectual and artistic tradition that we find evidences of it in nearly every branch of her life up to the present day.

When an orthodox Hindu takes his bath in the morning, he utters a prayer in Sanskrit, which can be translated thus: 'Oh ye Gaṅgā and Yamunā, Godāvarī and Sarasvatī, Oh Narmadā, Sindhu, and Kāverī, reside in this water (in which I am taking my bath).' All the great rivers of India are thus enumerated; and as the humble villager utters this prayer in the morning, perhaps he feels inwardly not only that the whole of India is one land, but that the rivers of this sacred land are also holy.

Besides the seven holy rivers, there are also the four holy lakes—Bindu, Pampā, Nārāyaṇa, and Mānasa.

Reference may be made in this connection to the seven holy places situated both in the North and the South, reputed to confer salvation on

the pilgrims visiting the site: Ayodhyā, Mathurā, Māyā (Hardwar), Kāśī (Vārāṇasī), Kāñcī (Kanchipuram—both Śiva-Kāñcī and Viṣṇu-Kāñcī), Avantikā (Ujjain), and Dvārāvatī (Dwarka).

In a similar manner, the sentiment held about the forest-retreats (*āśramas*) of India, which are situated in every part of the land, and into which holy men retire for meditation, after having duly performed the duties of a householder's life, is also universally shared by all the regions of India.

CONCLUSION

Thus, in spite of the fact that the languages and religious sects of India are many—and there are well-marked differences between one regional culture and another—there is an over-all unity of design which binds the people into one family. This stems primarily from the economic and social organization of the country, and reaches over to a community of intellectual and emotional attachments and obligations. The details might vary from place to place, and from one caste to another, yet the sameness of traditions on which all of them have been reared cannot be denied.

From the point of view of the social historian, one can say that although 'distinctnesses' have of late been brought more to the forefront, and although geography is laid at the root of such differentiation by some authors, one can only do so by overlooking the wider cultural uniformity that was slowly built up in India as a result of many centuries of perhaps planned, or unplanned, endeavour. The social and economic system, with its attendant intellectual and emotional superstructure, had its obvious points of weakness, which need not be defended for any reason. But one should not overlook the fact that the system did not find general acceptance merely through political pressure or the intellectual jugglery of the Brāhmaṇa class. This would be to overlook one outstanding fact in Indian history, namely, that the productive organization associated with caste had greater survival value in the past than its alternatives in ancient India, whether they were derived from indigenous cultures or from intrusions like those which followed in the wake of the Islamic conquerors from Central and Western Asia. It has only been in the course of the last two centuries, when European influence was attended by a more efficient productive organization, that the ancient productive organization has found itself faced by a serious competitor, in whose presence there is every likelihood that it will eventually succumb.

But the urgency of social reform, or one's inner sympathies in the direction of economic equality, need not interfere with the obvious merits of the caste system, in so far as they are objectively ascertainable.

The kind of unity of culture which India built up in the past belonged

to a climate of peace. It was unsuited to cope with the disaster of war. If nationalism in the West has created a uniformity, and an eradication of regional distinctnesses, it has done so more for the purpose of military survival than for serving the ends of peace. If a peace-time organization does not prove efficient in the emergency of war, it need not be blamed unnecessarily. For India did succeed in her experiment of building up, within her own borders, a unique system of production and distribution, and a way of bringing together many systems of thought into a confederation of cultures.

The time has perhaps come in the world today when we have to seek a unity and brotherhood among cultures, brought about not through the obliteration of distinctnesses, but through a process by which different cultures and peoples can retain their own way of life and thought, and yet remain in fraternal relationship with other communities striving in the same direction elsewhere. Nobody claims that such distinctnesses should be retained if the price is poverty or the suppression of other human communities. But if science can make it possible today to bring about a federation of cultures on the basis of prosperity instead of poverty, then the world would be reborn in a freedom for which humanity has been thirsting for ages past.

Indian civilization tried to achieve some of these results in ancient times. But the experiment was vitiated by social inequalities, which were the result of historical circumstances. Yet, India's achievements, in which the mind of man rose above and beyond the limitations set by geographical boundaries, and in which she reached an ideal of cultural fraternity, based on a statutory recognition of the need of mutual aid between groups pursuing economic ends under total social control, would remain one of her most distinctive and original, though imperfect, contributions to the totality of the world's civilization.

2

RACE AND RACE MOVEMENTS IN INDIA

IN dealing with race and race movements in this country, it is probably useful to delimit this essay within the definition of the word 'race'. The hereditary basis of race was emphasized by the early anthropologists. Topinard, in his definition of race, pointed out that 'races are hereditary types'.[1] This point of view was all the more strengthened when racial characters were found to behave in the Mendelian manner. Though the mode of inheritance is still unknown for a large number of racial characters, segregation appears to be obvious in no small number of them.

In the present essay, we will therefore follow Hooton's definition of the term 'race', which is as follows: 'A race is a great division of mankind, the members of which, though individually varying, are characterized as a group by a certain combination of morphological and metrical features, principally non-adaptive, which have been derived from their common descent.'[2]

Hooton has also differentiated between *primary* races and *secondary* races, according to the nature of their formation. Primary races are 'differentiated by early geographical and genetic isolation, by the loss of some genes and fixation of others, by mutations, by inbreeding, and by selection', while secondary races are formed 'by the stabilization of blends of two or more primary races'. With these concepts, we begin our study of the races in India. It may be useful to remind ourselves of what one of the foremost authorities has said in regard to India. S. L. Washburn, in his essay on 'Thinking about Race', has said that 'the area where the greatest mixing has occurred and which is hardest to classify should be the most central one, that is India'.[3]

RACIAL TERMINOLOGIES

In considering race problems, the terminologies of racial elements are often confusing. The terms 'Aryan' and 'Dravidian' refer to linguistic groups, but they have been often used, and are still being used, in the ethnic sense. Knowing full well that the Jews are not a race but a religious group, we still find Jews are often mentioned as an ethnic entity. The

[1] Quoted by Walter Scheidt in his essay on 'The Concept of Race in Anthropology and the Divisions into Human Races from Linneus to Deniker'; see E. W. Count, *This is Race* (New York, 1950), p. 389.
[2] E. A. Hooton, *Up from the Ape* (New York, 1947), p. 448.
[3] Cf. E. W. Count, *op. cit.*, p. 696.

only excuse for the use of these long-standing terms probably lies in their 'honourable background', as stated by Ruth Benedict[4] in defence of the term 'race'. The situation is worse confounded when we find leading authorities adding to the confusion. As an example of it, we may cite Coon, Garn, and Birdsell calling all the peoples of North India as belonging to the 'Hindu' race—a term which, like the term 'Jews', has only a religious affiliation. Similarly, the term 'Proto-Australoid' has been used in Indian anthropology without a proper perspective. It was meant to denote the primary race of India and the proper term would be 'Veddid' or 'Australoid'. The term 'Proto-Australoid' literally means a race living before the Australoids. It has been very appropriately used by Movius[5] for those extinct forms like the *Homo soloensis*, the Wadjak and the Talgai.

All these confusions are obviously due to lack of precise data. It will be apparent from our later discussions how much archaeology has helped the reconstruction of the migrations and racial history of the Aryans. But in India, the human remains from the various archaeological sites, like Harappā, Mohenjo-daro, Taxila, Adittanallur (Adichanallur), Maski, Chingleput, and others, still await thorough study. Lack of proper archaeological co-ordination forces the ethnologist to confine his vision within a narrow horizon of recent history. Our ethnological concepts are likely to change with the publication of the reports on the above human remains.

RACE MOVEMENTS

The other noteworthy feature in all the previous studies is that almost all have sought to bring the races from outside India. Sir Arthur Keith commented upon this fact in very strong terms more than twenty years ago (1936); but since that date, there has been no improvement in our line of thinking. To quote Keith: 'The bridge which links the Pathans of the North-West to the hill tribes of Travancore is still in existence. If evolution be true, and if the 352 millions of people now in India are members of the same great branch of humanity, this ought to be the case. Yet, strange to say, all, or nearly all, who have sought to explain the differentiation of the population of India into racial types, have sought the solution of this problem outside the Peninsula. They have never attempted to ascertain how far India has bred her own races. They have proceeded on the assumption that evolution has taken place long ago and far away, but not in the great anthropological paradise of India.'[6]

[4] *Race: Science and Politics* (New York, 1943), p. 32.

[5] H. L. Movius, Jr., 'The Lower Palaeolithic Cultures of Southern and Eastern Asia', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, New Series, No. 38. Pt. 4 (1948), p. 347.

[6] Arthur Keith, Review of B. S. Guha's 'Racial Affinities of the Peoples of India', *Census of India, 1931* (Delhi, 1935), I. iii, in *Man* (London), 1936. No. 29.

Race formation is a dynamic process and, in the variable vicissitudes of this country, environmental stimuli have caused many changes in ethnic types, as we shall observe hereafter. It is difficult to assume that this vast subcontinent was once a vacuum, and one is forced to this impression when one finds the following question in *The Cambridge History of India* regarding the Dravidians: 'Is there any evidence to show whence they came to India?'[7] But could they not have evolved on Indian soil? Keith is inclined to regard the Dravidian type as having evolved from the Veddids, and this, as will be shown later on, appears to be true. The manner in which a Veddid people, dwelling on the hills, changes, on its coming down to the plains, has never been carefully looked into, although many a hill people is gradually coming down and settling on the plains.

In the same manner, the migration of the Mundari-speaking peoples has been somewhat underestimated because of the unproved assumption that there is no ethnic difference between the peoples speaking the two languages, Mundari and Dravidian. The district of Santal Parganas in Bihar should be enlightening in this respect. Buxton[8] is right in pointing out the importance of this area as a 'refuge' of the jungle tribes. Here the Dravidian-speaking Male (Mālé)[9] can be seen in their primitive semi-agricultural state on the slopes of the Rajmahal Hills, while the Mundari-speaking Santals, with their well-developed irrigation and agriculture, occupy the valleys between the hills. The differences between the two, in physical features, language, and culture, are obvious to any casual observer. The Male represents the northern extension of the Veddids of the South, while the Santals are inveterate migrants. Each village has its quota, and, as soon as it is full, a band of pioneers goes out, seeking to establish another suitable village. The Santals are said to restrict their migration along the lateritic soil. Their population is also fast increasing, and this pressure of population has caused the people to migrate far and wide.

The Mundas also show the same physical traits and migratory habits. They have always confined themselves to the eastern coastland of India, and do not appear to have penetrated deep into the hinterland, which was already occupied by the Veddids. In an earlier study[10] it has been shown that the Mundas appear to be comparatively recent immigrants in this country. They have given rise to some peculiar hybrid combinations which are not met with in the case of any other aboriginal tribe in this land. The hybrids are known as (1) Khangar-Munda, (2) Kharia-Munda,

[7] Vol. I (Indian reprint, 1955), p. 37.
[8] L. H. Dudley Buxton, *The Peoples of Asia* (London, 1925), p. 118.
[9] S. S. Sarkar, *The Māler of the Rajmahal Hills* (Calcutta, 1938).
[10] S. S. Sarkar, *The Aboriginal Races of India* (Calcutta, 1954), Ch. V.

(3) Konkpat-Munda, (4) Karanga-Munda, (5) Mahili-Munda, (6) Nagbansi-Munda, (7) Oraon-Munda, (8) Sad-Munda, (9) Savar-Munda, (10) Munda-Bhuiya, and (11) Munda-Chamar. H. H. Risley noted that these hybrids are descended from intermarriages between Munda men and women of other tribes.[11] It is possible that the Mundas entered India without women. S. C. Roy was probably the first to note such intermarriages.[12]

The greatest movement into India from outside has been that of the Aryans or the Indo-Aryans, whichever we may prefer to call them, which caused a considerable change in the ethnic and cultural history of India. The largest influx occurred about 1200 B.C. from the Aral-Caspian basin, though sporadic infiltrations might have begun earlier. These people are represented by the eneolithic skulls found from the archaeological excavations at Tepe Hissar, Period I and II, near Damghan in Persia, while in Period III, we find another mesocephalic (medium-headed) people, besides the dolichocephalic (long-headed) Aryans. On the west, at Alishar in Anatolia, the same type of long-headed skulls has been discovered in Period IV, belonging to the Hittite period of Boghaz-Keui. The Baltis of southern Hindukush are at present the purest representatives of this race. The people of this race extended along the banks of the Indus, and are now found in the populations of the Punjab, Rajasthan, and Kashmir. They entered the adjacent regions of Tibet, as is evident from the physical features of the Ladakhis; spread far into eastern India along the Gaṅgā; and also migrated into South India. The Todas of the Nilgiris constitute, in their ethnic composition, a branch of this race. The Nampūtiri Brāhmaṇas migrated from North India during the fifth century A.D. The Aryan migration into Ceylon also occurred during the early centuries of the pre-Christian era, when the country was inhabited by the Veddas alone.

The mesocephalic people, mentioned above, form another immigrant population in India from the Iranian plateau. They are known as Scythians, and appear to have followed the Indo-Aryans not only in India, but also elsewhere. Iran, at present, shows a predominantly mesocephalic population, and as there appears to exist some affinity between the Iranians and the Scythians, it is better to call these people Irano-Scythians. Mesocephaly behaves dominantly over dolichocephaly, and it is found in no less frequency among certain populations of India.

The dolichocephals and the mesocephals have kept the north-western frontier of India so much occupied that little brachycephaly (broad-headed people) could infiltrate through them. At present, most of the high grades of brachycephaly are found on the north-western borders of India, and this

[11] *People of India* (Calcutta, 1915), p. 81.
[12] *The Mundas and their Country* (Ranchi, 1912), p. 400.

is due to the high frequency of this head-form in the Pamirs. They belong to the Turko-Altain stock and speak Turki languages, but, according to Czaplicka,[13] are not typical Mongolian. Brachycephaly of India can be called extreme types of mesocephaly. Whatever brachycephaly has entered into India is probably due to the 'brachycephalic hordes' of the prehistoric period as shown by R. P. Chanda,[14] though it is doubtful how far they influenced the head-form of the peoples of western India proper.

Population pressure appears to be the main cause of migration, and, in recent times, the migration of the Travancore Christians into the deserted Wynad plateau is an instance of Haddon's 'expulsion and attraction' theory.[15] The Wynad District of Madras was practically abandoned by the rich coffee-planters, due to the severity of malaria for years on end. This was an attraction to the over-populated peoples of Travancore, who began to move northwards in small bands a few years ago, bringing tapioca with them.

CRITERIA OF CEPHALIC INDEX

The cephalic index, in which the breadth of the head is expressed in the percentage of the length, is an important racial criterion. Cephalic index has been classified as follows:

Hyperdolichocephalic,	those	having	indices	below	69·9
Dolichocephalic,	,,	,,	,,	between	70 and 74·9
Mesocephalic,	,,	,,	,,	,,	75 and 84·9
Brachycephalic,	,,	,,	,,	,,	85 and above.

Eugen Fischer[16] has pointed out that each race has a typical cranial index.[17] This cranial index can be easily converted into cephalic index. Kappers has shown an ingenious method of study, covering a whole book, in which the cephalic index peaks of a distribution curve are seen to maintain its racial affiliation.[18] Kappers has also found that certain cephalic index peaks frequently occur together, which, according to him, 'may be mutations of each other, mutations perhaps that are present in the genotype of each of them, but whose appearance in the phenotype may depend on various circumstances'. We will see how far Kappers' method is applicable in India.

[13] Cf. C. U. A. Kappers, *An Introduction to the Anthropology of the Near East* (Amsterdam, 1934), p. 39.
[14] *The Indo-Aryan Races* (Rajshahi, 1916), p. 67.
[15] *The Wanderings of Peoples* (Cambridge, 1911).
[16] Erwin Baur, Eugen Fischer, and Fritz Lenz, *Human Heredity* (London, 1931), p. 123.
[17] Cranial index refers to skulls, whereas cephalic index refers to the living head.
[18] *Op. cit.*, p. 173.

B. S. Guha[19] in his Census Report of 1931, prepared a coloured map showing the distribution of the cephalic index in India, without mentioning anything about the actual frequency of the various indices. His map shows a sweeping distribution of brachycephaly southwards, round both the ends of the Himalayas. In the west, it includes the Pamirs, Afghanistan, Baluchistan, and Sind, and then, extending along the south-west, to broaden out at Bombay, it covers the whole of the Deccan and, finally, southern Madras. On the eastern end of the Himalayas, the broad-head colour (red) passes from Tibet and Bhutan southwards through Assam and Bengal and ends in Orissa.

With a view to testing this broad-headed strain in India, the present writer and two of his co-workers worked out all the available Indian data,[20] and their results are summed up in the accompanying map. It will be apparent from the map that brachycephaly is present in some zones in India, and is represented by the respective percentages within the circles. The highest frequency of brachycephaly is met with among the Kakar (76·8%) of N.W.F.P. (Zone A), Limbu (82%) of Nepal (Zone B), and Chakma (77%) of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (Zone C). The brachycephaly of Gujarat and Mahārāṣṭra appears to be Scytho-Iranian in origin; while that of Zone A has its origin in the Pamirs, that of Zone B is Mongolian in origin and that of Zone C is probably Malayan. To the last mentioned strain is also due the brachycephaly of Tirunelveli in South India. It will therefore be clear that brachycephaly in India does not show a sweeping distribution as shown by Guha in the map published by him.

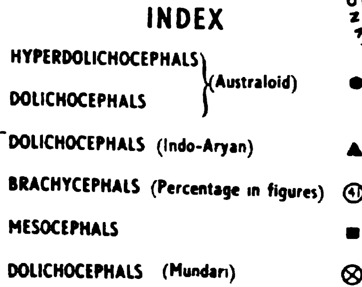
THE DOLICHOCEPHALS

It appears therefore that India is a predominantly dolichocephalic country, and, as Buxton[21] has pointed out, three peoples are associated with this form of head: (1) the aboriginal peoples of India, (2) the Dravidians, as represented by the Tamils, Telugus, etc. of South India, and (3) the Caucasians or the Indo-Aryans. The first, however, contain a high percentage of hyperdolichocephalic heads and deserve to be treated separately.

THE ABORIGINAL PEOPLES OF INDIA

The aboriginal peoples of India show a basic Veddid strain in almost all of them in varying degrees. This strain owes its origin to the Veddas of Ceylon, and because of their similarity with the Australian aborigines, this ethnic element is known as Australoid as well.

[19] 'Racial Affinities of the Peoples of India', *Census of India, 1931,* I. iii.
[20] S. S. Sarkar, K. K. Agarwal, and Usha Deka, 'Brachycephaly in India', *Man in India,* No. 35 (Ranchi, 1955).
[21] *Op. cit.,* p. 137.


RACE DISTRIBUTION
IN INDIA
SCALE
MILES
0 100 200 300
INDEX
HYPERDOLICHOCEPHALS
DOLICHOCEPHALS
(Australoid)
DOLICHOCEPHALS (Indo-Aryan)
BRACHYCEPHALS (Percentage in figures)
MESOCEPHALS
DOLICHOCEPHALS (Mundari)
R Helmand
R Sindhu
ARAVALLI RANGE
VINDHYA RANGE
R Narmada
R Yamuna
R Ganga
R Brahmaputra
RAJMAHAL HILLS
R Mahanadi
R Godavari
R Krsna
R Tungabhadra
R Pennar
R Kaveri
NILGIRI HILLS
KONKAN
WESTERN GHATS

The Vedda head-form, according to Osman Hill,[22] shows 23·1% of hyperdolichocephaly, while in the Vedda crania it has been found to be 50%. This hyperdolichocephaly occurs in 28·7% among the Uralis, a tribe now inhabiting the southern portion of the present State of Kerala. It is found to be as high as 24% among a northern group of people like the Oraons of Mirzapur in Uttar Pradesh.[23]

Hyperdolichocephalic crania have also been discovered in the archaeological excavations at Adittanallur, Nal, and Mohenjo-daro. Kappers[24] has pointed out that the hyperdolichocephalic skulls of Mohenjo-daro may be 'Veddoid'. Guha and Sewell[25] also meant the same, though they used the term 'Proto-Australoid'. Kappers[26] has figured the Chuhra skulls, measured by Havelock Charles, and there too, besides the main peak[27] at 71, which has been identified as Indo-Aryan, there is a peak at the hyperdolichocephalic scale at 67. A peak at the same scale is also seen in each of the other two caste groups, namely, the Chattri (Kṣatriya) and the Brāhman (Brāhmaṇa) of portions of Uttar Pradesh. As we examine more of the cephalic indices, we will find more of this hyperdolichocephalic peak, which shows that the Veddids were at one time widespread throughout the country, and possibly went out of it in the course of their migration. Veddid pockets have been reported from many places outside India also.[28]

On the west of India, Coon described a Veddid pocket in Hadhramaut in South Arabia,[29] and recently he has also described a fisher-folk belonging to the 'Murrayian type of the Australian aboriginies' in the swamps of the Helmand river in Afghanistan.[30] He finds this old ethnic strain among the Brahuis as well. Unfortunately, we do not possess any anthropometric data on the Brahuis, and those of Sewell and Roy, mentioned by Guha[31] in his Census Report of 1931, have still to see the light of the day. In the regions to the east of India, the Veddid strain occurs among the Sakai of Malaya, the Orang Mamaq, the Orang Batin, the Lubu, and the Ulu of Sumatra, the Nias Islanders, the Toala of Celebes, and the Moi of the Indo-China Hills. The extreme southernmost region of this ethnic type happens to be Australia.

[22] 'The Physical Anthropology of the Existing Veddas of Ceylon', *Ceylon Journal of Science* (G), III. Pts. 2 and 3 (1941 and 1942).

[23] P. C. Mahalanobis, C. R. Rao, and D. N. Majumdar, 'An Anthropometric Survey of U.P., 1941: A Statistical Study', *Sankhya* (Calcutta), IX. Pts. 2 and 3 (1949), p. 315.

[24] *Op. cit.*, p. 119.

[25] B. S. Guha and R. B. S. Sewell, 'Human Remains'; see Marshall, *Mohenjo-daro and the Indus Civilization* (London, 1931), Ch. XXX.

[26] *Op. cit.*, pp. 7, 115.

[27] Peak, here, refers to the high frequency of a certain index, as seen in a graph.

[28] Sarkar, *The Aboriginal Races of India*, p. 26.

[29] 'Southern Arabia: A Problem for the Future', *Papers of the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology* (Harvard University), XX, 1948.

[30] *Caravan* (London, 1952), p. 159.

[31] *Op. cit.*, p. xxii.

The Veddids, who either dwell in the caves or on the hills, can be called an essentially hill people. The Male of the Rajmahal Hills appear to be one of the truest representatives of the Veddids in North India. They show a typical Veddid peak at 70, while the main peak appears at 73 instead of 74 of the Vedda. We may recall here how the Malpaharias originated from the Male. After the Male rising of 1772, the British Government induced some of the hill people to settle on the plains by giving cash doles and other facilities. The retired personnel of the hill regiment, raised by the East India Company, was also made to settle on the plains. These people, who came to be known as Malpaharias, now show a little variation in physical features from the Male.

Apart from the case of Malpaharias, who have taken up another name, and probably undergone some amount of miscegenation with the low caste Hindus, changes in physical features were also observed among the Plains Male, who have yet retained the parent name, language, and culture. This change can be described as intra-tribal variation, and the cause of this variation is probably their change of habitat. The Plains Male show an increase in stature, head length, head breadth, and total facial height, while in all other characters they show a decrease. In the case of the Malpaharias, auricular height, head breadth, minimum frontal breadth, and nasal breadth show a tendency to decrease, while all the other characters tend to increase. This will be evident from the table given below:

MEAN VALUES SHOWING INCREASE OR DECREASE (IN MM.)

Characters	*Male*	*Plains Male*	*Malpaharia*
Stature	1566·40	1581·80	1573·60
Auricular height ..	133·52	131·30	129·96
Head length	184·21	181·54	184·30
Head breadth	137·23	137·70	137·11
Minimum frontal breadth	100·54	100·15	100·13
Bizygomatic breadth ..	130·98	130·28	132·07
Bigonial breadth ..	96·89	94·49	99·52
Nasal height	47·20	45·98	47·52
Nasal breadth	39·61	38·70	39·07
Nasal depth	19·49	19·24	20·22
Upper facial height ..	65·68	63·87	71·02
Total facial height ..	109·67	110·06	112·20

It will be thus seen that a change in habitat, like that from the hills to the plains, or the branching out from the tribal stage amidst other peoples, may cause changes in physical features. Similar variation in blood groups

has also been noted by the present author among the Male and the Santal of the same area.[32]

Such ecological differences bringing about changes in physical features have long been known among many peoples. Among the Veddas too, the coastal and the inland Veddas show some amount of physical difference between them. E. Thurston found such a difference between 'the jungle Kanikars and the domesticated Kanikars', in which he noted that the stature increased in the latter by an average of 3·5 cm., while the nasal index decreased from 84·6 to 81·2.[33]

The Veddas came into conflict earliest with the Aryan invaders who imposed their language upon them. There are very little anthropological data on these intruders, but it appears that both the Veddas and the Indo-Aryans have been much modified by mutual contact.[34] The Todas show a peak at 74, which supports all the more the North Indian origin of the Todas. Here, too, it appears the 74 peak is a variant of the Indo-Aryan 72 peak.

EVOLUTION OF THE DRAVIDIANS

In the very same manner, the present-day Dravidian-speaking peoples of South India appear to have evolved. Because of their Veddid-Indo-Aryan ancestry, they should show at least a bimodal (two-peaked) curve of cephalic index—one at 69-70 and the other at 72-75. Ecological changes, as seen in the case of the Plains Male, or Malpaharia, might bring about changes in the peaks. The mean values of the Veddids, like the Chenchus (72·89) and the other Dravidian-speaking peoples, such as the Tamils, Telugus, Kannadigas, etc., always show a dolichocephalic mean; and only the Nampūtiri mean of 72·51 shows a somewhat different picture, probably due to the North Indian origin of the latter.

There is also a hyperdolichocephalic element among the above Dravidian-speaking peoples. The Vellala shows 5% hyperdolichocephaly and 62% dolichocephaly, according to Risley.

Thurston has also noted that the 'hyperdolichocephalic type survives in the dolichocephalic inhabitants of the Tamil country at the present day'. The persistence of hyperdolichocephaly among these peoples shows its genetic significance, and probably it behaves recessively with dolichocephaly.

Sir Arthur Keith pointed out that the type represented by the Telugu Brāhmaṇas, which Guha regarded as the essential and prevalent Indian type,

[32] S. S. Sarkar, 'Blood Grouping Investigations in India, with Special Reference to Santal Parganas, Bihar', *Transactions of the Bose Research Institute*, IX (1937-38).

[33] *Castes and Tribes of Southern India*, I (Madras, 1909), p. xlvii.

[34] A. C. Haddon, *The Races of Man* (Cambridge, 1924), p. 111.

might have evolved from the Veddid type.[35] The present writer fully agrees with this view of Keith and has discussed this probable mode of evolution already. Keith also pointed out that the Kadars and the Pulayans, who were grouped separately by Guha, are a variant of the Veddids. There seems to be no justification even to call these two small groups 'variants' of the Veddid type. They are essentially a part and parcel of the Veddid type.

We have seen that ecological changes can bring about variations in stature as well as in the cephalic index. Stature is liable to change due to a large number of other causes. Endocrines may also affect the stature, as also improved standards of nutrition and diet. Besides the environment, heredity plays no small part in the formation of stature.

The Veddids are characterized by very short stature, and this type of stature is widespread in certain parts of India. If all the very short-statured (159 cm. and below) peoples are grouped regionally, it will be seen that they show a very high frequency, as much as 92% among the Kanikars. It dwindles to 64% in the case of the Uralis. Thus, beginning from the Veddids of South India, we find the very short-statured element taking a north-easterly direction along the hilly belt on the east coast. It occurs in no less frequency among the Dravidian-speaking peoples, like the Tamils, Telugus, etc., till we find it occurring in 22% among the Korkus and in 18% among the Khonds of Orissa. In Santal Parganas, the Male possesses it in about 70%, while among the other aboriginal tribes of Bihar and Orissa, it varies between 30-60%. It gradually decreases in frequency as one goes to the west along the Gaṅgā. It is found in lower percentages among the higher castes. Among the Brāhmaṇas of Bengal, it occurs in 13%, while among the Bagdis, it is found in 46·5%. Among the Bihar Brāhmaṇas, it occurs in 9%, while it occurs in 47% among the Musahars. Among the U.P. Brāhmaṇas,[36] it is found in 18·6%. In the Punjab, it is not found among the Sikhs at all, while the Chuhras show only 10%. Thus, this character appears to be present in almost all populations.

It will be therefore apparent that the present-day Dravidians have evolved from the Veddid type through changes caused in their physical features by the varied environmental conditions.

According to Buxton, the pre-Dravidians and the Dravidians represent the first and the second immigrants, respectively, of the famous 'Brown Race' of Elliot Smith, but he was of opinion that the 'two peoples seem to be ultimately derived from the same stock'.[37]

[35] *Op. cit.*, p. 30.
[36] Mahalanobis, Rao, and Majumdar, *op. cit.*, p. 267.
[37] *Op. cit.*, p. 139.

THE INDO-ARYANS

We have up to now discussed two of the three long-headed groups of India, and the third group is known as the Indo-Aryans or the Aryans. The cephalic index peak of this group of peoples lies at 73, while in the crania it is at 71. Kappers has shown the stability of this peak. This peak occurs at 72 in the cephalic indices of the Brāhmaṇas, Chattris (Kṣatriyas), and the Chuhras of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh of Risley. A very prominent peak at 72 is also obvious in the U.P. Brāhmaṇas.[38] The Maithili Brāhmaṇas also show a peak at 72, while the Kanaujia Brāhmaṇas of Bihar at 73.[39] The Chattris also show a peak at 73,[40] while the same measured by Risley show the highest peak at 72. The Baltis of Hindukush show a peak at 73, and this can be taken to be the true Aryan peak. The 72 peak in the above peoples therefore appears to be a variant of the 73 Aryan peak. This racial strain is obvious in the upper castes of Bihar. Among the heterogeneous Bihar Brāhmaṇas of Risley, a flat peak occurs at 72-73, but further eastwards this peak assumes a very insignificant character as found in the Bengal castes. Here dolichocephaly merges into mesocephaly.

THE MESOCEPHALS

The cephalic indices of the Brāhmaṇas, Kaivartas, and the Pods of Bengal, all measured by Risley, show the same highest peak at 77, while the Kāyasthas show it at 80. The latter, of course, show a smaller peak at 77. This proves the basic homogeneity in the head-form of the peoples of Bengal, though some of the low caste population, like the Bagdis, show a somewhat different picture. In this mesocephalic nature of the peak, there is also an agreement with the peoples of West India. The four caste groups, Deśastha Ṛg-Vedī Brāhmaṇa, Deśastha Yajur-Vedī Brāhmaṇa, Candrasenīya Kāyastha Prabhu, and the Citpāvana Koṅkaṇastha Brāhmaṇa show their peaks between 77-79, while the Vadnagar Gujarātī Brāhmaṇas show, like the Kāyasthas of Bengal, the highest peak at 80 together with a smaller peak at 78. At the same time, a difference between the two groups of peoples of the two different geographical regions is also apparent. In Bengal, the 77 peak alone dominates in all the four castes, with a slight exception among the Kāyasthas, and no peak occurs at 78 or 79. The highest 80 peak of the Kāyastha has also its counterpart among the other three castes, excepting the Brāhmaṇas, who show a high peak at 84 indicating the highest brachy-

[38] Mahalanobis, Rao, and Majumdar, *op. cit.*, p. 267.
[39] B. K. Chatterji, 'A Comparative Study of the Somatic Affinities of the Maithili and Kanaujia Brahmins of Bihar'. *Anthropological Bulletin, No. II, Zoological Survey of India* (Calcutta, 1934).
[40] Mahalanobis, Rao, and Majumdar, *op. cit.*, p. 273.

cephaly of all. The importance of the 77 peak will be realized from the cranial index curve[41] of 81 skulls from Contai in Midnapore, now in the collection of the Department of Anthropology, University of Calcutta. This agreement between the cranial and the cephalic index is rather surprising. Kappers is of opinion that differences of 1 unit or less for brachycephaly, 1 or more for mesocephaly, and 2 for dolichocephaly are very near the truth, though it is difficult to give a general rule.[42]

In western India, the Citpāvana Brāhmaṇas form a very interesting group because of their very light skin colour, and both Guha[43] and Karve[44] have also noted a high frequency of light-coloured eyes among them. A. Baines has noted a belief among the Brāhmaṇas of North India that the Mahārāṣṭrians are of Persian descent and 'the Citpāvana Brāhmaṇas of Konkan were their sun-priests introduced in the seventh century and formally adopted into local hierarchy'.[45] The cephalic index curve of the Mahārāṣṭrians of Goa shows multiple peaks. Its highest peak occurs at 76 followed by one at 78.

Mesocephalic skulls have also been found in the cairn burials of Hyderabad,[46] and also at Adittanallur.

It is probable that there is a genetic relationship between the mesocephals of western India and those of Bengal. Whether there is a continuity of this strain along the central tableland of India has never been carefully inquired into, but a plausibility, however, exists that the 77-79 index people might have migrated along the Narmadā valley to Sone and then to Bengal. The route of the Marāṭhā depredations far into the city of Calcutta may be a pointer in this direction. Coon associates the horse culture with the Scythians, and the Marāṭhā cavalry of the olden days, along with their long spears, are too well known in Indian history.

Round heads are more variable than long heads. Such a high variability is the characteristic of the Scytho-Iranians ; probably, they are the most variable of all. Risley was right in recognizing the Scythian element in the population of western India, and Kappers makes a very cautious comment: 'Whether or not in a much earlier time these mesocephalics also migrated in a south-eastern direction into India and there are still represented by the Scytho-Dravidians, so well described by Sir Herbert Risley, I do not

[41] Papia Bhattacharjee, 'Cranial Capacity of Bengalee Skulls', *Man in India*, No. 37 (1957), p. 257.

[42] *Op. cit.*, p. 8.

[43] *Op. cit.*, p. xxx.

[44] Irawati Karve, 'Beobachtungen über die Augenfarben an Chitpavan Brahmanen', *Zeitschrift für Morphologie und Anthropologie* (Stuttgart, 1934), XXIX. p. 498.

[45] *Ethnology* (Strassbourg, 1912), p. 46.

[46] E. H. Hunt, 'Hyderabad Cairn Burials', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, London, LIV (1924), p. 140.

venture to decide'.[47] But he was definite that these people were different from the Indo-Aryans, and are 'represented in the present population of Persia by the Kurds and by the 78-79 group of cephalic indices found in the present population of Persia'.

The Kurdish cephalic index is characterized by a 78 peak followed by a large group of peaks between 81-84, which is due to the Circassians of western Caucasus. This Kurdish element might be responsible for both the high mesocephaly and the brachycephaly of western India.

Recent scholars of history of art and archaeology, following the discoveries of the Russians and Germans, have also made out a good case for the Scythian influences 'into the body social of India onwards from the beginning of the Christian era'.[48] Their influences are apparent in the different schools of art, in textile forms and designs, in certain designs of gold and silver ornaments of women, and also in the Bengal terracottas of the seventeenth-nineteenth century. They have been attributed to the northern nomadic ethnic intrusion represented by the Śakas, Kuśāṇas, Ābhīras, Hūṇas, etc. The Hūṇa influences are also reflected in the names of a number of villages in north-western Madhya Pradesh, and a caste surname 'Hūṇa' has also been reported by R. V. Russell and Hiralal.[49] Quite a large number of these peoples are now covered by the blanket term 'Rajput' or 'Rājaputra', who grew upon the ruins of the Gurjara-Pratīhāra empire.

This mesocephalic element extends eastwards into Assam, but is not met with in Burma.

NORTH-EAST FRONTIER

The North-East Frontier of India is inhabited by a large number of Naga tribes, who exhibit in them a strong Nesiot or Indonesian strain both in race and culture. Assam and this region of India have been comparatively recently occupied by the immigrants, and the Ahom invasion of Assam took place during the thirteenth century. The Indonesian movements appear to be much earlier. Possibly, it began with the Polynesian movements during the first century B.C. These people are aware of terraced agricultural practices, and probably came from the region of the Indo-China Hills, wherefrom they learnt the cultivation of rice. They appear to have migrated into the hill valleys of Chota Nagpur and the adjacent areas. The Mundari peoples, like the Santals etc., are aware of such agri-

[47] *Op. cit.*, pp. 124, 220.

[48] Niharranjan Ray, *Presidential Address, Section II, Indian History Congress, December, 1954*, pp. 10-13.

[49] *Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces of India* (London, 1916), IV. p. 453.

cultural practices, though linguistic affinities affiliate them with the Mon-Khmer. Another interesting people of the above linguistic group are the Khasis.

The ethnic composition of these peoples is very difficult to assess. Firstly, there are little anthropometric data on them, and even these are incomplete in many respects. Haddon[50] tentatively suggested a strong ancient Australoid strain among the Khasi, Kuki, Manipuri, Miri, Kachari, etc., and in a weaker form among the Nagas. This suggestion is now confirmed by Guha and Basu, who found it in the Naga crania studied by them.

The measurements of the various Naga groups[51] show high brachycephaly of 58·82% among the Ao Nagas, while it decreases to 37·5% among the Sema Nagas, and to 22·73% among the Konyaks. The majority of the Naga groups as well as the Khasis, however, show a high percentage of mesocephaly. The Chang and the Rengma preponderate in dolichocephaly. Buxton has suggested a Parcoean element in the 'Mongolo-Dravidian' ethnic group of Risley and also in the Munda-speaking peoples.[52]

The Pareoeans have, according to Haddon,[53] 'considerably mixed with local non-Mongolian races', and as regards the Mundas, he notes that 'there is often a reminiscence of Mongoloid traits'. The purest form of the Pareoeans is seen among the Chinese of Hoang Ho ; they are characterized by a short thickset build with broad head and face. Some of the Naga groups, like the Ao and the Sema, almost agree with these features. The dominance of mesocephaly is, however, apparent in N.E.F.A., and this head-form probably dominated over the Australoid dolichocephaly, which seemed to be at the base of all these peoples. A Mongoloid strain is obvious among all of them—their straight lank hair, high cheek bones, yellowish colour of skin, and, above all, the short thickset build.

Summing up, we find that the peoples of India are predominantly dolichocephalic, and are mainly composed of the following three ethnic strains: (i) The Veddids who appear to be the autochthones of India ; (ii) The Dravidians of South India who appear to have evolved out of the above hyperdolichocephalic Veddids through various ecological changes ; and (iii) the dolichocephalic Indo-Aryans who entered India across the north-western frontier about 1200 B.C., with a different language and culture, and occupied the plains of the Indus and the Gaṅgā up to the borders of Bengal. They overran the whole country and crossed over to Ceylon during the

[50] *The Races of Man*, p. 116.
[51] J. H. Hutton, *The Angami Nagas* (London, 1926).
[52] *Op. cit.*, p. 143.
[53] *The Races of Man*, p. 32.

early centuries of the pre-Christian era. They also intermixed with the autochthonous population, thereby bringing about many changes in physical features.

The mesocephals of India followed the Indo-Aryans in their wake, and much of their ethnic strain is due to the Irano-Scythians. The brachycephalic population of India has its origin in four different sources. Firstly, the Irano-Scythian element contained some amount of brachycephaly, while the second source lies in the brachycephalic hordes of Central Asia (Pamirs) who entered India during the prehistoric times. The third source is probably Malayan, as is seen in the coastal regions of the Chittagong Hill Tracts and Tirunelveli. The fourth source is Mongolian.

Another immigrant population in India, the dolichocephalic Mundas, who seem to be also highly mixed up with the Veddids, appear to have reached India along the eastern border and show in them the Pareoean racial element.

3

REGIONAL STRUCTURE OF INDIA IN RELATION TO LANGUAGE AND HISTORY

NATURE seems to have designed India in a mood of poetry. And geology has analysed the successive stages of creative effort that led to the consummation of that poetical composition. The sector of the crust of the earth that we call our India is, according to it, made up of two entirely different sections. The first, peninsular India, is one of the oldest land-masses of the earth, its core being made up of crystalline azoic Archaean rocks which cover 750,000 sq. miles of Indian territory. The second consists of the border-mountains of India which are comparatively very young, and whose core of folded sedimentary rocks rose out of the bottom of the sea through a long series of earthquakes only in the Tertiary or Cainozoic Age. The North Indian plain, which connects the two, is but a creation of yesterday, having been formed through their interaction. And yet it is this plain, which became habitable for man only from ten to five thousand years before our time, that is the cradle of Indian civilization.

ANCIENT JANAPADAS DEVELOP INTO LINGUISTIC UNITS

When the Aryans first reached here, they must have found it a very congenial habitat compared to the dry steppes of Aral-Caspian region, or the mountainous tracts of Iran, Afghanistan, and Central Asia. But this plain, on account of its very fertility, must have been a vast expanse of primeval forest when Aryan colonies first appeared in it like islands in a sea. Stories of the clearing of that forest are still preserved in our ancient tradition.

The social organization of the Aryans at the time was tribal ; they were divided into a number of tribes or *janas*, as they were called. A history of the expansion of these tribes and their gradual occupation of the whole of northern India as also a part of the Deccan, during the course of a millennium, was traced out of the tangled skein of our Paurāṇic tradition, through a most painstaking objective research, by the late F. E. Pargiter.[1] This showed that the tribal settlements were conditioned by dictates of geography and conformed to the natural divisions of the country, and that tribal expansion always followed the most natural routes—and this, in its turn, proved the general veracity of the tradition.[2]

[1] F. E. Pargiter, *Ancient Indian Historical Tradition* (London, 1922).

[2] Jay Chandra Vidvalankar, *Bhāratīya Itihās kī Rūparekhā* ('An Outline of Indian History' in Hindi. Allahabad, 1933), pp. 236-39.

In the course of time, the territory in which a *jana* had settled came to be known as its *janapada*, and birth or domicile in a *janapada* began to be considered a greater bond than the original kinship of the tribe. Thus out of the original *janas* or tribes were evolved *janapadas* or nations, the tribal State or *jāna-rājya* giving place to *jānapada-rājya* or national territorial State. By amalgamation, conquest, and other means, some of the original *janapadas* later developed into *mahā-janapadas*, and we hear of sixteen such great nations in the age of the Buddha. There followed a period of a *caturanta-rājya*, a kingdom embracing the four ends of India, viz. the all-India empire of the Mauryas extending from Kamboja to the frontiers of the Tamil land. By this time the Aryanization of the whole of India including Ceylon had been complete, and the Indian colonization of Further India and Serindia began.

Throughout this period, and up to the close of the Gupta period (*c.* A.D. 540), though the ideal of an all-India empire and a feeling to regard Indians as one people were always there, and the struggle for empire incessant, the *janapada*-patriotism continued to remain strong and active, and the love of the different nationals for their own *janapadas* acute. In the Maurya period, decrying another's *janapada* was a cause for libel.[3] Seals of *janapada*-corporations, inscribed in characters of the third and fifth century A.D., have been found in excavations of ancient sites. This shows that the group life of various Indian regions which started in the Vedic age continued right up to the end of the Gupta period at least. From a later point of view, even the *mahā-janapadas* of the sixth century B.C. comprised small areas. 'The ancients were not great conquerors,' declared Bāṇa, an author of the seventh century A.D., 'for in a small area of land they had a number of kings.'[4] By the close of the Gupta period, however, the *janapadas* had grown sufficiently in size, and in the middle ages they came to be almost what we find them today.

The linguistic survey of India, along with the study of the ancient Indian history, has revealed a very interesting fact. The areas of Indian dialects and languages as they are found today correspond, in a striking manner, to the ancient or medieval *janapadas*, or *janapada-saṅghātas* (federations of *janapadas*). To take an example, we have a famous group of *janapadas*, viz. Kurukṣetra, Matsya, Pañcāla, and Śūrasena, described in the *Manu Smṛti* (II. 17-19). Of these *janapadas*, Kurukṣetra corresponds to the area of modern Bangaru dialect, Matsya to that of Mewati and Ahirwati, North Pañcāla to that of Khari-boli, South Pañcāla to that of

[3] *Arthaśāstra of Kauṭilya* (Ed. Shama Sastri, Second Edition, Mysore, 1919), pp. 193-94.
[4] *Harṣacarita* (Nirnayasagara Press, Bombay, Second Edition, 1897), p. 213.

Kanauji, and Śūrasena to that of Braja-bhakha,[5] the aggregate representing the area of modern Hindi minus that of one of its dialects, Bundeli, i.e. the whole area of Hindi so far as it lies in the North Indian plain. This shows a survival of India's *janapadas* through the long periods of her national coma and political dependency. And with the new revival of our age, the self-consciousness of those old units has reasserted itself.

For a proper understanding of Indian history and culture, it is therefore necessary to have a clear conception of these units of, what we may call, Indian cultural federation, through which the group life of Indian people has expressed itself for three thousand years. As these units were formed by people effecting their settlements according to the natural divisions of the country, which gradually grew into various linguistic units, we have to make a survey of the divisions of India as seen by the Indian people and compare them with the linguistic divisions, briefly going into their history where necessary.

THE SINDHU-GAṄGĀ PLAIN

The north-western headland of peninsular India, in the form of the Ādāvaḷā (Aravalli) range, along with the *bāṅgar* (dry upland) of Kurukṣetra, divides the waters of North India into two great river basins. The Sindhu (Indus) basin is again easily divided into two regions: its upper section, where the Sindhu flows along with its five feeders, is the Punjab, while the valley of the lower Sindhu is the province of Sind. The upper Gaṅgā valley, where the Yamunā and the Gaṅgā flow in a south-eastern direction, together with the *bāṅgar* of Kurukṣetra, is 'Ṭheṭh Hindustān' or 'Hindustan Proper'. Adjoining this, to the east, are the valleys of the Gomatī and the Sarayū (Ghargharā, or Ghāghrā, or 'Gogra'), which form the region of Avadh (Oudh) or Kośala. The middle Gaṅgā valley from Vārāṇasī (Banaras) to Bhagalpur makes up the region of Bihar, while the lower valleys of the Gaṅgā and the Brahmaputra form the well-known region of Bengal. The solitary upper valley of the Brahmaputra, where it flows westwards, is the region of Assam.

THE PENINSULAR INDIA

Ancient Indian geographers had marked seven mountain-ranges in peninsular India, which are enumerated in the following well-known verse in the Indian style of circumambulation, i.e. going from east to south etc. in the clockwise direction.

Dhirendra Varma, *'Hindustān kī Vartamān Boliyoṅ ke Vibhāg aur unkā Prācīn Janapadoṅ se Sādṛśya'* ('The Regions of the Present Dialects of Hindustan and Their Similarity with Ancient Janapadas'), *Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Patrikā* (Banaras, 1922), III. 379 ff. As I have said elsewhere, Varma made this discovery without recognizing that he had discovered a gold mine.

Mahendro Malayaḥ Sahyaḥ Śuktimān Ṛkṣaparvataḥ
Vindhyaśca Pāriyātraśca saptaite kula-parvatāḥ.[6]

As hydrography of all these ranges has been described in detail in Paurāṇic literature, i.e. names of all rivers springing from each range are given, it has been possible to identify six out of the seven ranges with certainty.

Mahendra is the mountain range between the Mahānadī and the Godāvarī. The whole system to the south of the Kṛṣṇā was included in the Malaya range, *malaya* being a Sanskritized form of the Dravidian *malai*, meaning a mountain. There were four Malayas, the fourth one being the mountain of Ceylon.[7] The other three evidently were: (1) the Nallamalai or Śrī-parvata washed by the Kṛṣṇā to its north and the North Pennar (Vaḍa-Painnāra) to its south; (2) the chain of hills rising to the south of that river, going south-west and ending in the Nīlagiri plateau; and (3) the trans-Kāverī Malayas, viz. the Annāmalai and the Elāmalai (Cardamom Hills), running right up to Kanyā-Kumārī.

The Sahya range is that which is called the Western Ghats; it branches off from the Nīlagiris and goes in an unbroken chain along the west coast, throwing a number of spurs towards the east. The fourth mountain, Śuktimat, has not been conclusively identified. It represented either the Mūsī-Hyderabad plateau, or the chain of hills from the Mekala (Maikal) to Mt. Pārasnāth. The fifth range, Ṛkṣa, comprised the Sātpurā range and the Mahādeo Hills definitely, and probably also their eastward extension through Maikal range to Mt. Pārasnāth and further.

The last two ranges, the Vindhya and the Pāriyātra, form the northern border of the Peninsula. Their boundaries are clearly indicated and should be noted with care. The Pāriyātra range included the Aravallis as also their south-eastern comb-shaped spurs which make up the plateau of Mālwā. It was drained by all the rivers from the Parṇāśā (Banās) in the west to the Vetravatī (Betwā) in the east. The westernmost river springing from the Vindhya range was the Daśārṇā (Dhasān). The Vindhya range thus comprised the Bhāṇḍer and Kaimor ranges. Modern English maps have mistakenly extended the name to the mountains of Mālwā, though it is not in local use there as the Vindhyas lie further east, and this has caused much confusion to scholars of ancient Indian history, e.g. in the matter of locating the domain of General 'Vindhyaśakti', father of Emperor Pravarasena, of the third century A.D. We shall note the significance of this distinction in the context of linguistic regions too.

For marking out the regions of peninsular India, it is convenient to

[6] *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* (Ed. Pargiter. Bibliotheca Indica), LVII. 10-11. *Vāyu Purāṇa* (Ed. Rajendra Lal Mitra. Bibliotheca Indica, 1880), I. 45. 88.
[7] *Kāvyamīmāṁsā* of Rājaśekhara (Gaekwad's Oriental Series, 1916), p. 93.

divide it into two sectors. The northern sector, made up by the Pāriyātra, Vindhya, and Ṛkṣa ranges, forms the central belt of India. At its western extremity is the alluvial plain of Gujarat, including the peninsula of Kathiawad, differing from the Indo-Gangetic plain inasmuch as it is made up more of esturine and marine than of riverine deposits. The territory around the Aravallis was given the name Rajputānā by the British. It now forms the State of Rajasthan. Its south-eastern extension, the plateau of Mālwā, is now in the State of Madhya Pradesh. Further east, the Vindhyan territory from the Betwā to the Ṭons, bounded by the Yamunā on the north and the Tapatī (Tāptī) in the south, is called Bundelkhand, i.e. the land of the Bundelās. As 'Bundelā' means an inhabitant of the Vindhyas, Bundelkhand simply means Vindhya-land. The upper valley of the Son, along Kaimor range, to the east of Bundelkhand, is Baghelkhand. It stretches in the south up to the Maikal range. The easternmost portion of the central belt is Jharkhand or Chota Nagpur.

Coming to South India proper, we may again divide it into two sectors, the middle course of the Kṛṣṇā serving as the dividing line. The western portion of the northern sector, dominated by Mt. Sahya, is Mahārāṣṭra. It is almost a triangle, with its base along the seacoast, one arm stretching from the mouths of the Tāptī to the source of the Waingaṅgā (Veṇā), and another from that point to Goa. The lower Godāvarī and Kṛṣṇā valleys, adjoining it to the east, form the Āndhradeśa. Between the latter and Bengal, around the lower Mahānadī valley is the territory of Orissa. The upper Mahānadī valley between Orissa and Mahārāṣṭra and just below the Maikal range, is Chattīsgarh or Dakṣiṇa (South) Kośala.

The high synclinal plateau to the south of the Kṛṣṇā-Tuṅgabhadrā, formed by the junction of the Malaya and the Sahya mountains, is Karṇāṭaka.[8] The seacoast below it to the south-east is Tamilnāḍ or Tamil country, and to the south-west, Keraḷa. The island of Siṁhala or Ceylon also is culturally a region of India.

THE HIMALAYAS AND THE COGNATE RANGES

In modern geography, the name Great Himalayan Range is specifically applied to that chain of the highest mountains in the world, within the southward bends of the Sindhu and the Brahmaputra, which begins with the Naṅgā Parvata in the west and whose further course eastward is represented

[8] Vijayanagara was once the proud capital of Karṇāṭaka kings. After its fall in 1565, they retired to Penukoṇḍā, 120 miles south, and later in c. A.D. 1600 to Candragiri in the Tamil coast. It was from the Rājā of Candragiri that the East India Company got the land for their factory and fort at Madras. As the Rājās of Candragiri were known as Karṇāṭaka Rājās, the English called the Tamil coast under their rule 'Carnatic'. In view of the revival of the name Karṇāṭaka in its original sense, the use of 'Carnatic' in the latter sense should be avoided now.

by such altitudes as Nunkun, Bandarpūnch, Kedāranātha, Nandādevī, Dhaulgiri, Gosāinthān, Gaurīśaṅkara, Saragmāthā,[9] Kāñcanjaṅghā, and Cumlari. The range has the shape of a sword with its hilt towards the west. From the plain of North India to this snow-line we are led by two smaller ranges, running parallel to the Great Himalayas throughout their course and acting as their steps. These are the Lesser Himalayas and the Sub-Himalayas. The idea of the three parallel ranges is common knowledge in the Himalayan districts. In our ancient literature they are styled *antargiri, bahirgiri,* and *upagiri.*[10] There are a number of ranges supporting the Himalayas on the northern side too, called the *avaṣṭambhagiris*[11] of the Himalayas according to Paurāṇic terminology. The most important of these have been christened in modern terminology as the Ladākh and the Kailāsa ranges, and run parallel to the Himalayas almost along their whole course.

There is yet another range of mountains between the Himalayas and the Ladākh range, named the Zanskar range, running from the river Zanskar (a southern tributary of the Sindhu) up to the Ghāghrā, where it joins the Himalayas. The sources of the Gaṅgā are in it and the valley of Badarikāśrama lies at its foot on the other side of the Himalayas. The Himalayas with the Ladākh and Kailāsa ranges form the southern bulwark of Tsāng-Thang, the great plateau of Tibet, which is shouldered on its northern side by the Kiun Lun. At its western end, the two sets of mountains are drawn near each other, and the Muz-tāgh or Karākoram with its mighty glaciers comes in between the two. The Muz-tāgh with the Hindkoh[12] also makes the southern bulwark of the Pāmīrs. The Raskam or Yārkand Daryā, the river Sītā of the ancient Indians, is the dividing line between the Muz-tāgh and the Kiun Lun as also between the plateaus of Tibet and the Pāmīrs.

Where is the boundary line between India and Tibet? The sources

[9] 'Saragmāthā' is the local name by which the highest peak in the world, which is being called Mt. Everest, has been traditionally known to the people of the Dudh-kosī valley in Nepal who live in its vicinity. In the uppermost portion of the valley, known as Okhaldhungā, the name is pronounced as Sagarmāthā. The peak has been known to the Tibetans for centuries as Tchomolungmā and to Indo-Tibetans as Chomolungmā. After the Everest was first discovered in 1852 as the highest peak, a German geographer, Hermann von Schlagintweit, who visited Nepal in 1855, told the inquisitive scholarly world that its local name was Gaurī-śaṅkara, and this name was used along with Mt. Everest till 1906. But at this time, it was found by an experienced surveyor that the twin-peaked Gaurīśaṅkara, visible from the Nepal valley, was really 36 miles west of the Everest and was much lower in height than the latter, and that the Everest was not visible from the Nepal valley.

[10] *Mahābhārata, Sabhāparvan*—II (Critical Edition, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona, 1943), XXIV. 2.

[11] *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa,* LIV. 19-21 ; *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (Śrī Veṅkaṭeśvara Press, 1901), V.16.11.

[12] By an edict of the Government of Afghanistan, published in 1955, Mt. Hindukush has been renamed as Hindkoh.

of the Gaṅgā, according to Indian tradition, mark the northern boundary of India.[13] According to modern conception, the sources of the Gaṅgā are in the Zanskar range. Taking this range as a repetition of the Great Himalayas, we may take the latter as, broadly speaking, the northern border line of our country. Ancient Indians had marked the distinction between the Great Himalayas and the northern ranges beyond them ; still they often used the name Himagiri in a general sense, as in many accounts of *digvijayas* (conquests). This is also evident from the Turki name Muz-tāgh, which is a literal translation of Hima-giri.

THE HIMALAYAN REGIONS

We shall now briefly survey the Himalayas, which enclose within their ranges some of the most picturesque valleys of the world.

(1) *The Kashmir Group*: Below Naṅgā Parvata, and between the Sindhu and the Kṛṣṇagaṅgā-Jhelam (properly, Jehlam), lies the westernmost district of the Himalayas, Hazara or Rash, the ancient Uraśā. The beautiful north-south valley of the Kāgān, with the old Aśokan site of Mansehrā, forms its special feature.

The circuitous upper valley of the Vyath, the Kashmiri name of the Vitastā or Jhelam, is the famous Kashmir. From the Great Himalayas, beyond the sources of the Kṛṣṇagaṅgā, sprouts a Lesser Himalayan range which, proceeding westward, finally turns south, dividing all the way the waters of the Kṛṣṇagaṅgā from those of the Vyath. These are the Harmuk (Haramukuṭa) and Kājnāg mountains. Another range, marked by Mt. Amaranātha, branches off from the Great Himalayas a little further east, proceeds due south, and, encircling the sources of the Vyath, turns north-west, where it is called Pir Pantsāl (Pañcāladhārā). These mountains of the Lesser Himalayas surround the valley of Kashmir on all sides, leaving only a narrow outlet for the Vitastā at Baramula (Varāhamūla). During the four Glacial epochs of the early Pleistocene, when the ice-cap of the Himalayas came down to 5,000 ft. above sea-level, the whole of Kashmir valley, which has a level of 5,200 ft., became a frozen lake. During the Interglacial periods when the ice receded, water drained off through the Baramula gorge gradually, and the valley remained a lake, 1,000 ft. deep. The periodic fall in the level of that lake was marked by deposits along the slopes of mountains at levels from 11,000 to 5,000 ft. These high-level, flat silt-platforms known as *karewas* cover half the area of Kashmir.

In the lower valley of Kṛṣṇagaṅgā, at its southward bend, is the small town of Shārdī, the ancient Śāradā-tīrtha, for which Kashmir was known as Śāradā-pīṭha. This lower portion of the Kṛṣṇagaṅgā valley is one with

[13] *Vāyu Purāṇa*, I.45.81.

Kashmir in race and speech; its upper portion, where the river flows westwards, belongs to Daradadeśa, of which we shall speak later.

The Amaranātha range is drained on its eastern side by the Maruvardvān, the Vedic Marudvṛdhā, which joins the Chenāb at Kashtwar (Kāṣṭhavāṭa). Both Maruvardvān and Kashtwar valleys are akin to Kashmir in race and language.

The sub-mountainous country between the Jhelam and the Chenāb, marked by the towns of Punch (Parṇotsā), Rajauri (Rājapurī), and Bhimbhar, is Chhibhal, the ancient Abhisāra, and that between the Chenāb and the Rāvī, Dārva (modern Dugar). Dārvābhisāra is a famous group in our classics. Dugar, with its capital at Jammu, is the home of the sturdy Dogras. Above Dugar region is the western end of Dhaulādhār, another range of the Lesser Himalayas. Between Dugar and Kashtwar, to the north of Dhaulādhār, is the quiet valley of Bhadrava (Bhadrāvakāśa), the easternmost district of Kashmir.

(2) *Kangra to Kanaur*: The Dhaulādhār is the central figure in the second group of Himalayan valleys. Sprouting from the Great Himalayas to the left of the Sutlej at the source of the Ṭons, it runs up to the Chenāb, allowing the Sutlej, the Beās, and the Rāvī to cut gorges through it. The sub-mountainous country below it and between the rivers Rāvī and Beās is Kangra, which together with the Sutlej-Beās *doāb* formed the ancient Trigarta. The upper fringe of the *doāb* consists of two parallel Sub-Himalayan ranges, the Śivālak and the Solāsiṅgī, whose valleys make the regions of Hoshiarpur, Bilaspur (or Kahlūr), and Nalgarh in the elbow of the Sutlej. Between the Solāsiṅgī and the Dhaulādhār the valley of the Beās is known as Mandi, and that of the Sutlej, Suket.

The upper valleys of the Chenāb and the Rāvī lie between the Dhaulādhār and the Great Himalayas. The Chenāb above Kashtwar is still known by its Sanskrit name Candrabhāgā. Its valley as also the valleys of its two original contributaries, the Bhāgā and the Candrā, make the territories of Pangi and Lahoul. The upper valley of the Rāvī is Chamba.

From the source of the Candrā at Bara-Lacha Pass, the Great Himalayan range runs almost due south, like a sword bending beyond its hilt, until it reaches the gorge of the Sutlej. In its lap, at the sources of the Beās, lies the beautiful valley of Kullu. The other side of the Himalayan range here is drained by the river Spiti, whose left is all along flanked by the Zanskar range. The Spiti valley opens in the upper valley of the Sutlej, called Kanaur, which, as I have shown elsewhere, is the ancient Kinnaradeśa.[14]

[14] Jay Chandra Vidyalankar, 'Raghu's Line of Conquest along India's Northern Border', *Proceedings of the Sixth All-India Oriental Conference*, 1930, pp. 111 ff.; *Bhāratabhūmi aur uske Nivāsī* ('India and Her Inhabitants'. Agra, 1931), pp. 305-8; *Bhāratīya Itihās kī Rūpa-rekhā*, pp. 1060-63.

The lower boundary of Kanaur is Dhaulādhār, and the upper, the Zanskar range, while the Great Himalayan range runs across it.

(3) *Kyonthal to Kumaun*: Below Kanaur, between the Sutlej and the Ṭons, are four small linguistic regions: Kyonthal, Jubbal, Baghat, and Sarmaur. The city of Simla is the centre of Kyonthal. The highlands beyond the Ṭons are known as Jaunsar-Bawar; amongst the Sub-Himalayan valleys below them, that of Dehradun is the most famous, '*dūn*' meaning a valley (Skt. *droṇī*).[18]

Further east, the whole territory drained by the tributaries of the Gaṅgā, from the Bhāgīrathī to the Piṇḍār, is Garhwal. It contains some of our holiest *tīrthas*. The main stream of the Gaṅgā is not Bhāgīrathī, but Alakanandā, and at each of its junctions with other streams there is a Prayāga. Going upstream along this series of Prayāgas, one reaches Joshīmaṭh in the heart of the Great Himalayan range, where the twin original contributaries of the sacred river, Viṣṇugaṅgā and Dhaulīgaṅgā, unite their crystal waters. At the head of the valley of Viṣṇugaṅgā is situated Badarikāśrama.

To the east of Garhwal is Kumaun or Kūrmācala. It comprises the valleys of the Rāmagaṅgā and its tributary, the Kosī, as also the valley of the Sarayū which flows into the Kālī. Mts. Triśūla, Dūnāgiri, and Nandādevī form its crown. It is a district of picturesque lakes, and through it lies the direct route to Mt. Kailāsa and the Mānasa Lake.

(4) *Nepal*: The catchment area of the Ghāghrā in the Himalayas adjoins that of the Gaṅgā, and forms the western one-fourth of the Nepal State. It abounds in extensive Sub-Himalayan *dūns* or valleys, famous for their fertility. Its eastern limit is indicated by Mt. Dhaulgiri. From Dhaulgiri up to Gosāinthān is the catchment area of the Gaṇḍak, which the Nepalese call Saptagaṇḍakī. Like Kumaun, it is adorned by high-altitude lakes, the most famous of which is Sūrya-kuṇḍa, at the head of the river Tādī or Sūryamatī. Saptagaṇḍakī region has also historical places like Pālpā and Gorkhā, the latter having given its name to the dynasty that now rules the State. The various streams of the Ghāghrā and the Gaṇḍak have their sources beyond the Himalayas in Ladākh range. In the trans-Himalayan valley of the Kālī-Gaṇḍak is situated the *tīrtha* of Muktinātha.

Beyond Saptagaṇḍakī is the valley of Nepal proper with its three ancient towns of Kathmandu, Bhatgaon, and Patan. It is the valley of a minor river Bāgamatī, with its two tributaries, the Viṣṇumatī and the

[18] *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, VV. 14: *Vāyu Purāṇa*, 1.36.33, 1.37.1, 3.

Manoharā, which effect their junction here. Like Kashmir, it was a lake in the Glacial epochs, and is now a plain surrounded by high mountains on all sides, but its area is only one-fifth that of Kashmir. It has also its high-level silt-platforms, known here as *ṭāṇḍs*.

The easternmost district of the State of Nepal, up to Mt. Kāñcanjaṅghā, is Saptakauśikī, i.e. the catchment area of the river Kosī. Like the Ghāghrā and the Gaṇḍak, the Kosī also has its sources beyond the Himalayas, and the valleys of its streams lead up to the Tsang province of Tibet.

(5) *The Eastern Section*: The Himalayas east of Kāñcanjaṅghā are drained into the Brahmaputra. And the Great Himalayan range here bends a little northward in the manner of the edge of a sword. The valley of the Tistā, immediately adjoining Saptakauśikī to its east, is Sikkim. At its lower end is Darjeeling, the Dorje-ling or *vajra-dvīpa* (thunderbolt *doāb*) of the Tibetans. Further east, the valleys of the rivers Torsā (Amochhu), Raidak (Chinchhu), Sankosh, and Manās, all originating in the Great Himalayan range, make up the State of Bhutan. Through the valley of the Torsā, also called Domo (or Chumbi) valley, runs the modern highway to Lhasa and Shigartse. The ancient highroads to Tibet ran along the Triśūlī-Gaṇḍak and the Sun-Kosī.

The valley of the easternmost tributary of the Manās is Towang or Monyul. Beyond Towang are tribal territories of four Kirāta people: (1) Akas or Ankas; (2) Daflas; (3) Miris, who inhabit the Subansiri valley, and Abors, who dwell along the southern course of the Brahmaputra and with Miris form one tribe; and (4) the Mishmis, who live in the valley of the Lohit.

THE NORTH-EASTERN FRONTIER

The high line of altitude characteristic of the Himalayas comes to a close by the river Subansiri. From its east a range of mountains hangs over the plain of Assam as it stretches eastwards up to the Lohit. From the east of the Lohit valley, an arm of this range extends south-west; this is the Nāmkiu range. The Pātkoi Hills and the Nāgā Hills are an extension of the same system, encircling the valley of Assam on three sides. Between the Nāgā Hills of the border and the Khāsī Hills of the interior, there is a descent marked by the valleys of the rivers Kapilī and Dhanasiri. Our border-line runs along the spurs of the Nāmkiu, Pātkoi, and Nāgā ranges, penetrates the hills of Manipur to a distance, and then, proceeding along the Lushai and Chatagaon (Chittagong) Hills, touches the sea. The Indian language and race have penetrated to some extent into the hills of Manipur, Tripura, and Chatagaon.

THE NORTH-WESTERN FRONTIER

(1) *Daradadeśa and Bolor*: We return to Naṅgā Parvata at the western end of the Great Himalayas. Going along the crest of the Himalayas eastwards, we reach a sudden fall, forty miles before the next eminence, viz. Mt. Nunkun. This is Zojila or Zoji Pass,[16] a great geographical and ethnic landmark. It is from here that the Harmuk range, forming the northern border of Kashmir, branches off from the Great Himalayas ; it is at this point again that the south-eastern boundary of the Darada country meets the south-western boundary of Tibet—not the political, but the ethnic boundary of the Tibetan people. The districts of Ladakh, Zanskar, Rupshu, Hanle, and Chumurti, to the east and south-east of this point up to the Sindhu valley, were annexed to the Punjab-Kashmir State of the Sikhs by General Zoravar Singh in 1835-40, and, since the annexation of the Punjab by the British, have remained in the Jammu-Kashmir State. But they have always been and still remain Tibetan in race, speech, and culture. Ladakh or Mar-yul ('butter-land') has been known to Kashmiris as 'Buḍ Buṭun' or the Great Tibet, and Zojila as *Bhuṭṭa rāṣṭrādhvan*[17] ('the pass leading to the country of Tibet').

The Daradas (Dards), on the other hand, are an Indian people, closely akin to Kashmiris in race and speech, who have been living to the west and north-west of Zojila since the dawn of history. The upper Kṛṣṇagaṅgā valley at the foot of the Great Himalayas belongs to them, but their settlements extend far beyond to the Sindhu valley across the Himalayan and Ladākh ranges, and to the Gilgit and Hunza valleys across the Sindhu. It follows that the northern boundary of India does not proceed along the summit of the Great Himalayan range beyond Zojila. From that point, the present boundary line of the Darada speech goes north-east up to Khaltse, in the *doāb* of the Sindhu and the Shyok, whence it turns westward along the Ladākh range. To its north, between the Ladākh and Kailāsa ranges, around Skardū and the confluence of the Sindhu and the Shyok, is Bolor or Bāltī—the 'Lukh Buṭun' or Little Tibet of the Kashmiris. Encircling it along its southern and western sides, the boundary again turns due north opposite the fort of Bunji in the first southern bend of the Sindhu, and crossing the river, ascends the Hunza valley, until it strikes the eastern edge of the Hindkoh at Tāghdumbāsh Pāmīr. It then proceeds westwards along the Hindkoh to include the valleys of Yāsīn, Mastuch, and Gilgit.

Bolor is now Tibetan in speech, but Dardic in race and in social organization.[18] The Tibetans occupied it sometime after the eighth century, when it was wholly Indian.

[16] '*Lā*' in Tibetan means a pass.
[17] *Rājataraṅgiṇī* of Kalhaṇa, VIII. 2887.
[18] A. H. Francke, 'A Language Map of the West Tibet', *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, LXXIII (1904), Pt. I. pp. 362 ff.

The old boundary of Daradadeśa[19] then went right into the Shyok valley, and mounting Karākoram Pass descended along the valley of the Sītā until it touched Tāghdumbāsh Pāmīr. The latter is the meeting point of three great mountain ranges. The Hindkoh here joins its eastern edge with the western edge of the Karākoram, and from this point the meridional range of Sarikol proceeds northwards.

(2) *Western Gandhāra, Kashkar, and Kapiśa*: Parallel to the Sindhu, to the west of it, run the rivers Swāt (Suvāstu), Pañjkorā (Gaurī), and Kūnar, tributaries of the river Kābul (Kubhā). Their lower valleys form the western half of the ancient Gandhāra, with the eastern half lying below Uraśā between the Sindhu and the Jhelam. The Darada country and Gandhāra are thus links between the cis-Sindhu and the trans-Sindhu Indian territories. The valleys of the Sindhu, Swāt, and Pañjkorā higher up are called Kohistan, and that of the Kūnar, Chitral or Kashkar. This may be our ancient Kāraskara country.[20] Just above Chitral, in the Hindkoh range, is Dorah Pass. From Dorah westward along the axis of the Hindkoh up to Khawak Pass and from the Kūnar westward up to the river Alishang, bounded towards the south by the river Kābul, is Kafiristan, the ancient Kapiśa, whose capital Kāpiśī was famous in our ancient history since the age of Pāṇini. Arab geographers called this country Kafisistan, i.e. the land of Kāpiśī, which a popular mistake turned into Kafiristan (the land of infidels). The valley of the Alishang's junction with the Kābul is Lamghan, the ancient Lampāka, which was a district of Kapiśa.

(3) *The Pāmīrs and Badakshan*: Parallel to the Sarikol, all along its eastern course, is another range, Kandar or Kāshgar. This system of two-fold meridional ranges is the axis of the plateau of the Pāmīrs, and is drained eastward into the Tarim and westward into the Oxus. The valleys of the various streams of the two rivers, especially of the latter, descending in tortuous slopes through picturesque scenery from the top of the Sarikol, are known as Pāmīrs. The eastern boundary of the system is the river Sītā (Yārkand), and the western, the great northward bend of the Oxus or Āb-i-Panjā as it is known here. The Sanskrit name of the river, Vaṅkṣu, is still retained by many of its streams and valleys, in the forms Waksh and Wakhan.

The Pāmīrs are inhabited by an Aryan race, the Tajiks, who have held their own in spite of centuries of Hunic, Turkish, and Mongol invasions. The language they speak is called Ghalcha.

[19] Dardistan is not an old name. It was first coined by G. W. Leitner in his *The Languages and Races of Dardistan* (Lahore, 1877).

[20] Jay Chandra Vidyalankar, 'Raghu's Line of Conquest along India's Northern Border', *Proceedings of the Sixth All-India Oriental Conference*, pp. 166-67; *Bhāratabhūmi aur uske Nivāsī*, p. 316.

To the west of the Pāmīrs, in the great bend of the Vaṅkṣu, along the northern slopes of the Hindkoh, and to the east of the river Kundūz, is the country of Badakshan, the ancient Dvyakṣa.[21] West of it in the same system is Balkh, the Bākhdhī or Bākhtrī of the ancient Iranians, the Vāhlīka of our own classics. Badakṣhan is like the Pāmīrs in natural scenery, and is inhabited by the same race. I have shown elsewhere that Pāmīr-Badakshan is the Kamboja *janapada* of our forefathers,[22] who knew the country since the later Vedic age. Kamboja-Vāhlīka is a familiar group in the *Mahābhārata* and Gandhāra-Kamboja in the Pali canon. Dvārakā, the ancient capital of Kamboja, has been identified with Darwaz in the Pāmīrs.[23] Balkh or Vāhlīka, though one of the most ancient Aryan countries, has now become Turkish in speech.

(4) *The Afghan Country*: From Tāghdumbāsh Pāmīr, the Hindkoh goes in a south-west direction up to Bamian, west of Kabul. Practically, the same range extends westwards as far as Herat, under the names Koh-i-Bābā and Band-i-Bābā. The Hindkoh-Band-i-Bābā system is the pivot of the Afghan plateau. It is the Uparishaena of the ancient Iranians, the Paropanisus of the Greeks. Where the Hindkoh joins its shoulders with Koh-i-Bābā, a great watershed is formed. From this key-point in the Afghan plateau the Kābul, the Helmand, the Harīrūd, and the Kundūz take their waters in different directions.

The Koh-i-Bābā throws a number of long ridges towards the south-west, which form watersheds between the various streams of the Helmand, and between that river and the Farāhrūd. Within the circuit formed by the Uparishaena range and its southern ridges, is Mt. Safed Koh, which also extends its two arms in the same direction in the same manner. There is a third system of mountains making the south-eastern fringe of the Afghan hinterland. The Sulaimān, with the parallel Shīnghar range at its back and the Ṭoba-Kākār range further west, encloses a large district, forming the apex of the triangle of the Afghan plateau.

The highroad running along the spurs of the Afghan hills, that joins Herat to Kandahar and Kandahar to Bolan Pass, marks the south-western boundary of the Afghan hinterland. Its eastern boundary goes along the spurs of hills until it reaches the north of the Safed Koh. Its northern boundary is indicated by the northern slopes of the Safed Koh, the upper valley of the river Kābul beyond its junction with the Alishang, and of its

[21] Moti Chandra, *Geographical and Economic Studies in the Mahābhārata: Upāyana Parva* (Lucknow, 1945), p. 58.

[22] Jay Chandra Vidyalankar, 'Raghu's Line of Conquest along India's Northern Border', *Proceedings of the Sixth All-India Oriental Conference*, pp. 102 ff.; *Bhāratabhūmi aur uske Nivāsī*, pp. 297 ff.; *Bhāratīya Itihās kī Rūparekhā*, pp. 470 ff.

[23] Moti Chandra, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

tributary, the Panjshīr, and across the Hindkoh, the northern edge-line of the plateaus along the slopes of the Band-i-Bābā.

(5) *Kalat and Las Bela*: To the south of Bolan Pass are Kalat highlands, from whose southern edge the Khīrthar and Hālār ranges extend towards the sea. Within these ranges are the valleys of three parallel rivers flowing north to south—the Hab, the Purālī, and the Hingol. The valley of the Purālī, with its chief city Bela, is called Las Bela. In the valley of the Hingol is the ancient *tīrtha* Hiṅgulāja,[24] which used to be visited by Hindu pilgrims up to the Partition of India. These highlands and valleys are now included in the province of Baluchistan. The traditional boundary line of our country runs along the western slopes of the Kalat upland and the Hingol valley to Rās (cape) Malān, where it strikes the sea.

THE FIVE ZONES

We have surveyed the natural divisions of India from the point of view of the Indian people in their own geographical terms. Our forefathers had a system of dividing the country into five zones, and for an ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and even political-historical study of India that classification is very useful. The five zones are: Madhyadeśa (the Middle Country), Pūrvadeśa or Prācya (the East), Dakṣiṇāpatha (the South), Aparānta or Pratīcya (the West), and Uttarāpatha or Udīcya (the North). We find them explained in the *Dharma-Sūtras*, in the Buddhist *Vinaya*, and in the *Bhuvanakośa* or gazetteer section of the Purāṇas. The provincial distribution of the Maurya empire conformed to these zones, and all the *digvijayas* described by our classical poets are arranged on this pattern.

The five zones are called the five Indies by the Chinese pilgrim Yuan Chwang (*c*. A.D. 640), and five *sthalas* by Rājaśekhara (*c*. A.D. 900).[25] In later periods, whenever there were regional States in India maintaining a balance of power for a sufficiently long time, they too generally conformed to them.

According to the Buddhist *Vinaya* (third century B.C.), Madhyadeśa extended from Kurukṣetra in the west to the town of Kajaṅgala (Kankjol in Santal Parganas) and the river Salilavatī (the Salai of Chota Nagpur) in the east, and from the Himalayas to the river Narmadā. Patañjali (*c*. 170 B.C.), following ancient *Dharma-Sūtras*, fixes Kālakavana or the Black Forest (of Santal Parganas) as the eastern limit of Madhyadeśa. Later, however, this boundary was shifted to Prayāga or to Vārāṇasī, and Bihar was included in the East. On the other hand, the modern Nepalese, with whom *madhes* (Middle Country) and *madhesia* (an inhabitant of the Middle Country) are

[24] *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa* (Jivananda, 1888), *Kṛṣṇajanma-khaṇḍa*, 76.21; *Devī-Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (Vangavasi Press, Calcutta), VIII.28.6.

[25] *Op. cit.*, pp. 93-94.

still terms of daily use, include Bihar in the Middle Country. The western limit of Madhyadeśa was, according to Patañjali and the *Dharma-Sūtras*, Vinaśana or Adarśa, i.e. the place where the Sarasvatī disappears in the desert, which is 74°50′E. Rājaśekhara defines the western countries as those to the west of Devasabhā, which may be Dewas in Mālwā, 22°58′N., 76°6′E. Uttarāpatha is defined by the same author as the country to the north of Pṛthūdaka, i.e. the modern Pihowa on the Sarasvatī, which is 29°58′N. This should roughly mean that the regions to the west of 76°E, if they are to the north of 30°N, will be included in Uttarāpatha. The regions which we now call north-western were thus styled as northern by our forefathers.

In terms of natural divisions, the Madhyadeśa included the regions of Ṭheṭh Hindustān and Avadh (and optionally Bihar) in the North Indian plain, along with the contiguous regions to their south in the central belt. That indicates an early contact of Aryan settlers with the northern sector of peninsular India.

LINGUISTIC REGIONS

Let us now compare the linguistic regions of India with the natural divisions and the zonal grouping, and see if they shed any further light on the movements of peoples in Indian history and their effects on the cultural development. The languages of India have been surveyed in another article by India's leading authority on the subject.

Like the Middle Zone of ancient geographers, there is a central branch of the Indo-Aryan languages, at whose centre again is the Hindi language, which belongs to the natural regions of Ṭheṭh Hindustān and Bundelkhand. But the central speech does not go further east to cover the whole Middle Zone; it has rather spread to the West Zone regions of Rajasthan and Gujarat and to the North Zone regions of East Punjab and the Himalayas east of Kashmir. The presence of a central speech in Gujarat is explained by the traditional account of the migration of the Andhaka-Vṛṣṇi tribe under the leadership of Kṛṣṇa from Mathurā to Gujarat.

Adjoining Hindi towards east is the mediate branch represented by a single language, Kosali.[26] It covers the natural regions of Oudh, Baghelkhand, and Chattisgarh. It is to be noted that both Hindi and Kosali have spread from the North Indian plain southwards to adjoining regions of the central belt, as in the case of the conception of the Middle Country, and Kosali has further descended to Chattisgarh or Dakṣiṇa Kośala. This

[26] This language was formerly known as Eastern Hindi, but linguists took pains to clarify that Western and Eastern Hindi were two separate languages. To remove this confusion, I proposed in my article in the first edition of this work that they should be called Hindi and Kosali respectively. The suggestion was adopted by India's leading linguist Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji.

indicates an early contact with the central belt, which is confirmed again by Paurāṇic tradition, wherein Cedi or Bundelkhand is one of the early settlements of emigrants from the Mathurā region. And a leading authority on the aborigines of central India, Dr. Hira Lal, saw in the story of the *Rāmāyaṇa* an account of Kośala Aryans expanding towards Dakṣiṇa Kośala. He showed that the distances and directions of localities as given in Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa* indicate Laṅkā's position at Mt. Amarakaṇṭaka; that *laṅkā* in Gondi meant an island as well as a hill-top, and *godāri* a river; that the sea near Laṅkā was the reservoir formed by the river Son at the base of Amarakaṇṭaka; and that Gonds had a tradition that they were descendants of Rāvaṇa and the Vānaras were the Oraons or Vraons.[27] This is indeed the most objective rational interpretation of the *Rāmāyaṇa* story. And as for South Kośala's contact with North Kośala, it seems to go back to the Eocene epoch when the North Indian sea had split up into two gulfs—a Sind gulf running from Cutch by way of Sind and Punjab to the borders of Nepal, and an Assam-Burma gulf—and in between the two a featureless rocky waste extended from the Vindhyas towards Oudh. Maybe, the unity of this tract remained conspicuous even after the rise of human species and the formation of the Indo-Gangetic plain, and the Gond people, after occupying the Vindhyas, spread along this tract up to the borders of Oudh, where they are still found, and the Aryan settlers of Oudh, having come in contact with them, were led through those contacts southward to the end of the Gond land.

Coming to the linguistic regions of the East and South Zones, we have only to notice that they conform in general to natural divisions. Assamiya or Assamese is really a dialect of Bengali, but its distinct geograpical position has given it the position of a language. If the northern fringe of the island of Ceylon is Tamil speaking, this exception only proves the rule, which is best illustrated in the case of Mahārāṣṭra. This land of Sahyādri and its eastern spurs began to take its distinctive shape at the end of the Cretaceous and the beginning of the Eocene epoch, through a series of volcanic eruptions, which raised its major portion into a 6000 ft. high plateau covered with lava. Ages of denudation transformed this into the well-known Deccan Trap system, a series of flat-topped hills that are a special feature of Sahyādri, and ages of decomposition turned the lava into the famous black soil of the Deccan. If this land, which was thus marked out by Nature as a unit at the dawn of the Tertiary Age, is also a linguistic unit today, it is not because of any organic connection between the Deccan Traps and

[27] Hira Lal, '*Avadhī-Hindī Prānt meṅ Rāma-Rāvaṇa Yuddha*' ('Rāma-Rāvaṇa War in the Avadhi-Hindi Region'), *Kośotsava-Smāraka-Saṅgraha* ('Lexicon Commemoration Volume', Vārāṇasī, 1929), pp. 15 ff.

black soil, on the one hand, and the Marathi language, on the other, though the natural environment must have produced some effect on the language too, but because of the simple reason that Indian languages developed their distinctive features in the wake of the disposition of tribes who spoke them and tribal settlements followed the configuration of the land.

As to the West Zone, we have already noted how the central speech has overflowed into Rajasthan and Gujarat. Sind too has a north-western speech ; hence there is no western branch as such of Indo-Aryan languages. The presence of a North Zone speech in Sind is explained by a Paurāṇic tradition, according to which Sindhu and Sauvīra were colonized by branches of the same tribe from North Punjab, Sindhu meaning the middle Indus valley and Sauvīra the modern Sind. Rajasthani language covers almost the whole of the present State of Rajasthan as also the Mālwā sector of what is now Madhya Pradesh. The social and economic life of Mālwā too is closely knit with that of the rest of Rajasthan. This is in complete accord with ancient Indian notions of geography, according to which the Pāriyātra range extends to Mālwā.

Linguists have marked out two languages in the Punjab, Punjabi of the East Punjab belonging to the central branch, and Hindki of the West Punjab, which, along with Sindhi, makes up the north-western branch of Indo-Aryan languages. But Punjabi and Hindki merge in each other so imperceptibly that it is difficult to demarcate the boundary, which is explained by the presence of Dardic element in both. Thus, for all practical purposes, Punjab has one language which its people call Punjabi. Its eastern boundary is the Ghaggar (Dṛṣadvatī) river, which is joined by the Sarasvatī, and has, throughout history, divided India's Madhyadeśa from the Uttarāpatha. To the north, Punjabi-Hindki covers the Sub-Himalayan tracts of Kangra, Dārvābhisāra, and Uraśā. Across the Sindhu, it covers the old West Gandhāra, where its boundary runs along with the Kāpiśī (Kafir) language. South of the river Kābul, it marches along the feet of Pakhtūn Hills with Pashto. It touches Sindhi in its south.

Sindhi is the language of the province of Sind, as also of the northern extension of the Sind plain, known as Kacci Gandav, which juts out like a wedge between the Kalat highlands and the Sulaimān range. Across the Khīrthar, the speech of the valley of the Purālī, i.e. the State of Las Bela, is a dialect of Sindhi, called Lasi, which is met by Balochi along the Hingol, the traditional Indian boundary. To the north of Las Bela, the Kalat plateau has a Dravidian speech, Brahui, which, like Gondi, has no literature. Its territory is small, with a sparse population, who, being mostly nomadic, generally winter in Sind, and have become bilingual.

Kacci Gandav, Kalat, and Las Bela were placed in the province of

Baluchistan by the British. The real Baloch country, however, lies across the Hingol. The Balochs came to this part of Iran from Kurdistan in the eleventh century A.D., and in the sixteenth they migrated further east and settled down in numbers on the borders of Sind and Punjab. Cut off from their home, they have been gradually absorbed in the autochthonous Sindhis and Hindkis. The British imperialists formed the province of Baluchistan, it would appear, as a camouflage device to cover up the Pathan territory which they had annexed during the second Anglo-Afghan war. For, its north-eastern portion, formed of the districts of Quetta-Pishin,[28] Zhob, and Loralai, was geographically, ethnically, linguistically, and historically a part of the Afghan plateau. It is the cradle of the Pathan race and the home of its purest stock. Along with the highlands of the former North-West Frontier Province, viz. Waziristan, Kurram, Afridi-Tirah, and Mohmand country, it has now been aptly named by people as Pakhtūnistān.

This brings us to the consideration of the Pakhto (or Pashto) region, the land of the Pakhtūns or Pathans. They are among the most ancient peoples of India, having been mentioned as Pakthas[29] along with the Śivas or Śivis (Śibis), a people of the S. W. Punjab, among the ten tribes that opposed the passage of the Ṛg-Vedic king Sudās on the Rāvī. The Pathans still know Sibi, a small town at the base of the Bolan Pass, which is reminiscent of the Śivis, to be their traditional southern boundary. Aparītas or Afrīdīs are mentioned in the Paurāṇic *Bhuvanakośa* section as a people of the North Zone of India.[30] We have a fresco in Cave XVII at Ajanta, wherein Buddha is shown preaching to his northern disciples; on one side are the Śakas wearing their *tigrakhaudā* (conical caps) and *cūrīdār pyjāmās*, and on the other, the Pathans wearing their *salvars*, the most suitable dress for the rugged Pathan country, ensuring freedom of movement in ascent and descent as well as protection from cold. The old northern boundary of the Pakhtūns was Mt. Safed Koh; but some of their tribes like Mohmands and Yusufzais crossed the river Kābul in the sixteenth century A.D. and settled in Swat and adjacent territory.

The Pakhto region, however, is only about half of the Afghan land, being its southern and eastern portion. The derivation of the name 'Afghan' has not been definitely determined; we find it used in the Sanskritized form 'Avagāṇa' by Varāhamihira in the sixth century A.D.[31] The Afghans include people other than the Pathans, chief among them

[28] 'Quetta' is the anglicized form of 'Koṭā', popular Hindki abbreviation of Śāl Kōṭ, the original name of the place, which used to be inscribed at its railway station up to World War I.

[29] *Ṛg-Veda*, VII.18.7.

[30] *Vāyu Purāṇa*, I.45.115; *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, LVII.36. Jay Chandra Vidyalankar, *Bhāratabhūmi aur uske Nivāsī*, p. 228.

[31] *Bṛhatsaṁhitā* (Ed. Sudhakar Dvivedi. Vārāṇasī, 1925), XI.61, XVI.37; Jay Chandra Vidyalankar, *Bhāratabhūmi aur uske Nivāsī*, p. 229.

being Tajiks. They speak either Ghalcha or a dialect of Persian known as Afghan-Parsi, and the Pathans call them Pārsīwāns. To a Pathan, Afghanistan is the land of Pathans and Pārsīwāns.

The Afghans as a race are a link between India and Iran, and so is their country. In history, however, they have been connected more with India than with Iran. From the time of Alexandar to that of the Arab invaders of the seventh-eighth centuries, every foreigner who came here has referred to the crest of the Hindkoh and the middle valley of the Helmand as the boundaries of India. Whenever a Greek ruler of Balkh or a Parthian chief of the lower Helmand valley extended his dominion to the south or east of these border lines, he invariably inscribed his coins with Prakrit legends. After Sind had succumbed to the Arabs, Afghanistan continued to roll back their invasions until the Khilāfat itself broke into pieces. It was during this period that the Afghan scholar Vīradeva, hailing from Nagarahāra, i.e. modern Ningrahar, a small tract to the south of Lampāka or Lamghan in the valley of the Kābul, between the river and the spurs of the Safed Koh, was invited by King Devapāla (*c.* A.D. 810-51) of Bihar-Bengal to serve as the head of the Nālandā *mahāvihāra*, where Devapāla's Sanskrit inscription has been found. Late in the medieval period, groups of Pathan people migrated to and established colonies in the Indian mainland, and some of their leaders acquired kingdoms. This movement started in the middle of the fifteenth century, when a Pathan from Sibi became chief of Multan in 1440 and Bahlūl Lodī took Delhi in 1451 with the help of Jasrath Khokar, the ruler of N.-W. Punjab. It came to a close in the eighteenth century with the settlement of Rohillas in Rohilkhand. During this period, the Afghans gave India one of her best rulers in the whole record of her history, viz. Sher Shāh. Pathans put up a stiff fight first against the Moguls and then against the British, when these invaded India. For this reason, both of them gave the Pathans a bad name in India, from the propaganda effects of which Indian intelligentzia has not as yet fully recovered.

The Kapiśa or Kafiristan region of the present State of Afghanistan, along with Chitral, Daradadeśa, and Kashmir makes one linguistic and ethnic group.

From the eastern border of Kashmir to that of the State of Nepal, the whole Himalayan region has one language, known as Pahari, its dialects between the Rāvī and the Yamunā being grouped as Western Pahari, those from the Yamunā to the Kālī as Middle Pahari, and those in Nepal State as Eastern Pahari or Parbatiya. Only the last one is developing a literature and being used for education and administration.

The learned author of the article on 'Linguistic Survey of India' in this volume has drawn attention to a peculiar phenomenon, viz. that the

intelligentzia of the regions of Kosali, Bihari, Rajasthani, and Middle Pahari have adopted Hindi as their language for education and culture. Historically this may be explained first as due to these regions having for long, or during recent period, remained under the political influence of Ṭheṭh Hindustān. Kośala and Bihar formed parts of the Madhyadeśa along with it. Secondly, it has been due to the underdevelopment of modern Indian languages. Their rise about the tenth century A.D. synchronized with the stagnation of our political, social, and cultural life, with the result that their literatures grew in a narrow range. Up to the beginning of the nineteenth century, none of the modern Indian languages, except Assamese and Marathi, had any prose literature worth the name. With the new renaissance of our time this situation is changing, and there are signs that people of those linguistic regions too are beginning to assert themselves in their own mother-tongues.

LINGUISTIC REGIONS IN CONTEMPORARY HISTORY

That with the re-awakening of Indian people after a long slumber, the linguistic communities which, as we have seen, had been the historical units through which the group life of people found expression, should assert themselves again, was quite natural. The Swadeshi Movement of 1905, which convulsed the whole of India, was touched off by the British attempt to divide the Bengali community. In a real democracy the language of the people has to be the vehicle of highest education and administration. The renascent Indian nationalism, therefore, set up as its ideal a federation of unilingual States of India, and demanded reforms accordingly. All the Indian languages have a common alphabet, all of them draw upon the mine of Sanskrit for their scientific terminology whenever they fail to find a suitable word in colloquial speech for expressing a new idea, and literatures of all have grown in an atmosphere of common ideology. These are to be the sure foundations of Indian unity in a federation of homogeneous unilingual States.

4

LINGUISTIC SURVEY OF INDIA: LANGUAGES AND SCRIPTS

I

THE population of India as a single geographical and cultural unit, now divided into the two separate States of India and Pakistan, forms one-fifth of the entire population of the world, and presents, at first sight, a bewildering variety of cultures, which have come to India throughout the fifty to sixty centuries of her long history. The meticulous and all-inclusive classification of the languages and dialects current in India and Burma (which, until 1937, was politically a part of India), as given in the *Linguistic Survey of India,*[1] shows a total number of 179 languages and 544 dialects.[2] These figures are staggering indeed for any single country or State claiming to be a nation, but they are to be taken with some caution and reservation. For instance, of the above numbers, 116 are small tribal speeches which mostly belong to Burma. Then, again, the consideration of dialects is irrelevant when we mention the languages to which they belong, for it is the great literary languages that really matter. There are, of course, some minor languages and dialects, which are either independent speeches confined to a particular primitive group, which in almost all cases affiliate themselves to some big language, or speeches spread over vast tracts of the country, which may have some restricted literary life, remaining under the shadow of some connected speech, which claims the public and official homage of all. The position of these spoken languages of a wide prevalence, sometimes over an entire province, is like that of Provençal or Celtic Breton in France, which have no *locus standi* before French.

MAIN LITERARY LANGUAGES OF INDIA: THEIR CLASSIFICATION

Considering these matters, it will be seen that India has only the following fifteen great literary languages: (1) Hindi and (2) Urdu, which are but two styles of the same Hindustani speech, employing two totally different scripts and borrowing words from two different sources, (3) Bengali, (4) Assamese, (5) Oriya, (6) Marathi, (7) Gujarati, (8) Sindhi,

[1] The linguistic survey of India carried out under Government auspices by G. A. Grierson (1903-27).

[2] The 1951 census gives a total number of 845 languages and dialects spoken in India of which 63 are non-Indian.

(9) Punjabi, (10) Kashmiri, (11) Nepali, (12) Telugu, (13) Kannada, (14) Tamil, and (15) Malayalam. The various aboriginal speeches current in the jungles and hills of the Himalayas, and of eastern, central, and southern India, like Newari, Khasi, Garo, Gond, Santali, Maler, Kota, Toda, etc., as well as those wide-spread and partially cultivated languages, in some cases spoken by millions, like Maithili, Chattisgarhi, Braja-bhakha, Marwari, etc., all find in one or the other of the above fifteen their accepted literary form. Fifteen languages for a population of about 437 millions (1951) is not a proposition that should frighten anyone.

These languages, however, fall under the following two distinct main families, and a knowledge of one in a particular family makes the study or acquirement of another in the same family easier: (1) the Indo-Aryan or Indo-European or, briefly, Aryan, and (2) Dravidian. Between them, they account for the languages of over 90 per cent of the population of India. There are also two other families which embrace some of the rather restricted, primitive or aboriginal speeches: (1) Kol or Austric or Niṣāda and (2) Sino-Tibetan or Mongoloid or Kirāta. Whereas the Aryan languages are spoken by 73 per cent of the total population of India and Dravidian by 20 per cent, the languages of the Niṣāda group account for about 1·3 per cent and the Kirāta group for only 0·85 per cent.

The present-day languages of India, belonging to these four families, have descended from one or the other of these four distinct and original source speeches, which may be described as the root language or the primitive or mother speech for that speech family. Thus, we have Aryan languages like Bengali and Marathi which at the present day are hardly mutually intelligible, except for some common inherited words and forms and for their largely borrowed vocabulary from Sanskrit; but both of these ultimately go back to a single speech, the Old Indo-Aryan Vedic language, from which both have developed in the course of twenty centuries. The Dravidian speeches, similarly, go back to a common Dravidian which may be called 'Primitive Dravidian', and which was probably an undivided speech about 2000 B.C. The Austric or Niṣāda dialects are similarly manifestations of a common archetype; and the Kirāta speeches of the present day can be reduced, if not to a single proto-Sino-Tibetan, at least to a group of closely connected dialects belonging to the same Sino-Tibetan family.

Before proceeding to reconstruct the linguistic history of India, it will be necessary to take stock of the existing languages as they are on the face of the country, not only the great literary languages enumerated above, but also the genetically connected speeches and the various aboriginal or primitive speeches. It would be best to make a general survey of the

various speeches of India, family by family, and give also indications of more close or intimate groupings within the family.[3]

I. THE ARYAN LANGUAGES[4]

(A) North-Western Group: (1) Hindki or Lahnda or Western Punjabi, 8½; (2) Sindhi (with Kachhi), 4.

(B) Central Group: (3) Hindi proper or Western Hindi (including 'Vernacular Hindustani', Khari-boli, with its two literary forms High-Hindi and Urdu, and Bangaru; and Braja-bhakha (Braja-bhāṣā), Kanauji, and Bundeli), *41; (4) Punjabi or Eastern Punjabi, 15½; (5) Rajasthani-Gujarati, consisting of (a) Gujarati, 11; (b) Rajasthani dialects, 14; and (c) Bhili dialects, 2.

(C) East-Central (Mediate) Group: (6) Kosali or Eastern Hindi (Awadhi, Bagheli, and Chattisgarhi), *22½.

(D) Eastern Group: (7) Oriya, 11; (8) Bengali, 53½; (9) Assamese, 2; (10) the Bihari speeches, *37, viz. (a) Maithili, *10; (b) Magahi, *6½; and (c) Bhojpuriya, *20½. (The Halbi speech current in Bastar District in Madhya Pradesh is usually connected with Marathi, but it would appear to be a separate member of the Eastern Group.)

(E) Northern or Pahari Group: (11) Eastern Pahari or Nepali, 6; (12) Central Pahari, including Garhwali and Kumauni, *1; and (13) Western Pahari dialects, 2.

(F) Southern Group: (14) Marathi, 21 (with Konkani, *1½).

DARDIC SPEECHES

The above Indo-Aryan languages and dialects all go back to the speech of the period of the *Ṛg-Veda* as their ultimate source. Side by side with these, there is another group of Aryan speeches which is slightly different from the Vedic. These are the Dardic speeches like Kashmiri, Shina, Bashgali, Pashai, Wai-ala, etc. The ancient Aryan speech, the source of both the Vedic and the Avestic languages, modified itself into three distinct groups: (1) Indo-Aryan, which came into India and developed there; (2) Iranian, the form it took up in Iran; and (3) Dardic (or

[3] For facility of classification and to maintain the proportion of different language groups, the figures quoted in this article for the number of people speaking different languages are taken either from the 1931 census for undivided India or from the Linguistic Survey estimates, which are mainly based upon the 1921 census data. The latest figures, according to the 1951 census, for the different languages, as far as they are available, are given in the Appendix at the end of this chapter.

[4] The figure after the name of a language or dialect indicates the approximate number of millions speaking it. An asterisk indicates Linguistic Survey estimates. The disagreement of the total of these figures with 257 millions as the number of Aryan speakers for 1931 is due to the non-inclusion of Iranian and Dardic speeches in the list given here, which is for Indo-Aryan only, and as, in cases of disagreement between the Census figures and the Survey estimates, the latter have, in some cases, been given preference.

Piśāca), current in the extreme north-west frontier of India, among tribes which until recently resisted Islam of their Afghan and Iranian neighbours, and hence were known as *kafirs*. Within the frontiers of India, there are a number of Iranian speeches current—for example, Pashto in the North-West Frontier Province as well as in Eastern Afghanistan and Baluchistan; Balochi in Baluchistan and Sind; and Kohistani in the north-western frontier within a limited area. A great many scholars hold the view that the Dardic speeches should be regarded as a group or sub-branch of Indo-Aryan itself and not as an independent branch under Aryan (i.e. Indo-Iranian). But the present writer thinks, with the late Sir George Grierson, who first put the Dardic languages on the map, that the Dardic languages should be recognized separately, since they show characteristics which partake of the nature of both Indo-Aryan and Indo-Iranian, though, geographically, they belong more to India than Iran, and from ancient times have come under the influence of Sanskrit. Thus among the Chitralis their supreme deity is Im-ra, which is the Sanskrit word 'Yama-rāja'; and one is occasionally startled by a good many words retaining almost unchanged their original Vedic or Sanskrit forms among the tribesmen of the north-west. Numerically, the most important Dardic dialects are Shina (68,000) and Kashmiri (1,500,000). Kashmir very early came to be affiliated to the cultural world of Sanskritic India, and distinguished itself for its Sanskrit learning. Both Sanskrit and Kashmiri languages were formerly written in the Śāradā character, a form of Indian writing which now survives in Gurumukhi of the Punjab and which resembles Devanāgarī very closely. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the Kashmiris were largely converted to Islam, and subsequently they accepted the Persian script. There is a little literature in Kashmiri.

EVOLUTION OF THE MODERN INDO-ARYAN LANGUAGES

The Old Indo-Aryan speech, represented by the language of the *Ṛg-Veda,* in its various closely related dialects, was brought into India by the invading 'Aryans' sometime during the second half of the second millennium B.C. It spread eastward from the Punjab into the Gaṅgā valley; and by 600 B.C., it established itself over the greater part of North India, from eastern Afghanistan to Bengal. In the process of its expansion, it was largely adopted by the conquered or the culturally influenced pre-Aryan peoples speaking dialects of the Dravidian, Niṣāda, and Kirāta groups. Through both normal development and the influence of the languages of the pre-Aryan peoples on it, the Aryan speech underwent a rapid modification; and by 600 B.C., particularly in the eastern Gaṅgā valley, which was farthest away from the Aryan nidus in northern Punjab, it entered into

the second phase of its history, the 'Middle Indo-Aryan' phase, which continued right down to about A.D. 1000, when the present 'New Indo-Aryan' phase came into being.

In the Middle Indo-Aryan phase, represented by Pali, the old Prakrits of the earliest inscriptions, and the various later Prakrit dialects found in the Jaina and other literature, in the Sanskrit drama, as well as in the Apabhraṁśa or the literary speech which became very prominent after A.D. 800, we note a gradual decay of sounds and forms of Old Indo-Aryan. The elaborate inflexional system of the Old Indo-Aryan speech came to be progressively simplified in Middle Indo-Aryan, and further modifications took place in New Indo-Aryan. In the Old Indo-Aryan period, there were tribal dialects which, with the expansion of the Aryan tribes in the east and south, became established regional forms of a single undivided Aryan speech. By 700 B.C., three such regional forms are specifically mentioned in the Brāhmaṇa literature: (1) Udīcya or Northern, which denoted the form spoken in North-West Punjab ; (2) Madhyadeśīya or 'the Mid-land' speech, as current in the tracts corresponding to eastern Punjab and western U.P. ; and (3) Prācya or Eastern, under which came the dialects of the present-day Oudh, eastern U.P., and Bihar. There was probably a fourth dialect group, the Dākṣiṇātya or Southern, which was spreading by way of southern Rajputana and Malwa towards Deccan. These regional dialect groups of 700 B.C. became transformed into various Prakrit speeches of the middle of the first millennium A.D., speeches which took their names from the areas where they were current. For example, Śaurasenī owes its name to Śūrasena (western U.P. and eastern Punjab) ; Māgadhī, to Magadha (Bihar)—this Māgadhī spread into Bengal, Assam, and Orissa ; and Ardha-Māgadhī, to the territory between these two. We know of other regional Prakrits and Apabhraṁśas like Āvantī (Malwa), Ṭākkī (North Punjab), Kekayā (West Punjab), Vrācaḍa (Sind), Gauḍī (North Bengal), Auḍrī (Orissa), etc. From these regional dialects of the Prakrit period have come into being, through the various local Apabhraṁśas, the present-day Indo-Aryan languages and dialects. It will be convenient to consider these in order of affiliation, beginning from the north-west.

The regional Prakrits of the north-west fall into three groups: those of western Punjab, those of Sind, and those of central and eastern Punjab. The western Punjab dialects now form a group known as Hindki and Lahnda. They did not develop any literary form, although a few books were written in various forms of Western Punjabi, particularly notable being the *Janamsākhī* of the Sikhs, and there is a small literature of songs and ballads in them. The speakers of Western Punjabi are now quite content to use for literature the much better cultivated Eastern Punjabi, or

the Urdu form of the great Hindi speech current in the Gaṅgā valley. Eastern Punjabi is largely cultivated by the Sikhs who use the Gurumukhi script for it, but both Hindi and Urdu are so strong in the Punjab that the local dialects have only a secondary existence. Punjabis, with a love for their provincial speech, use the Perso-Arabic script, if they are Muslims, and Devanāgarī, if they are Hindus. There is quite a good volume of literature in print in the Punjabi language in all the three scripts. Sindhi has an independent existence with some literature. Till the end of the nineteenth century, Sindhi was written indifferently in an Indian alphabet related to the Śāradā of Kashmir, or in a modified form of Persian alphabet, and sometimes in Gurumukhi, but later, mainly at the instance of Persian-knowing Hindu officials of the early British regime in Sind, quite an elaborate alphabet of Perso-Arabic origin was adopted for Sindhi. Sindhis who have migrated to India after the Independence are progressively adopting Devanāgarī script for Sindhi.

East of Punjab, the great Hindi or Western Hindi speech extends right up to central Uttar Pradesh. It has the following six dialects: In the east, there are Kanauji, Braja-bhakha, and Bundeli; and in the west, Khari-boli of Delhi, Bangaru or Jatu to the west and north of Delhi, and Vernacular Hindustani in Rohilkhand and Meerut subdivisions of Uttar Pradesh and in the contiguous tracts of eastern Punjab. The Khari-boli, the standard speech of Delhi, is the basis of the great literary language and lingua franca of North India, which has taken up various names and forms, as Hindi, Hindustani (or Hindusthani), Urdu, and Dakni. When written in the Devanāgarī character and showing a preference for indigenous and Sanskrit words, the language is known as Hindi; and Hindus in North India, from the Punjab to the border of Bengal, and in Central India have accepted this Hindi as their language of literature and of public life. Urdu is the Muslim form of this Hindi language which employs the Persian script, and has cultivated an Arabic and Persian vocabulary, excluding, as far as practicable, all Sanskrit and indigenous words. Hindustani is the basic speech underlying both Hindi and Urdu, and in this sense, it is now the official language of India (though called Hindi), side by side with, and gradually replacing, English. But in practice, Hindustani means only a form of Urdu with just a smaller admixture of Persian and Arabic words and only an occasional employment of a Sanskrit vocable.

The Hindi speech, in its native Hindi form or Muslim Urdu form, now dominates the Indian scene. From the Punjab to the frontiers of Bengal and right down to the Deccan, people speaking a dozen of the various Aryan languages and dialects have now accepted this Hindi (or its Urdu form) as their literary language and call themselves 'Hindi speakers'. Thus

millions of people, speaking at home the various dialects of Punjabi (both Eastern and Western), of Rajasthani (in Rajasthan and Malwa), of Kosali, or certain hill dialects (like Garhwali and Kumauni), and the Bihari dialects, do not usually study or cultivate their language, except to a very limited extent, but seek to express themselves through Hindi or Urdu. In this way, although Western Hindi proper is current among only 41 millions as their mother-tongue or home-language, the two literary forms of Khari-boli, or popular Hindusthani, claim the homage of over 140 millions of people. Besides, being the language of the central part of the country, and having been connected for two centuries with the centralized Mogul administration with its seat at Delhi, Hindi has spread over the greater part of Aryan India without any propaganda, and some 260 millions of Indo-Aryan speakers in India find their most natural lingua franca in it. Looked at from these aspects, Hindi can claim to be the third great language of the modern world, coming after North Chinese and English. Since speakers of a dozen languages have thus accepted Hindi with its new status, the earlier literatures in these different North Indian dialects have now all been grouped within Hindi literature. Early Hindi literature is thus made to include not only the literary productions in the genuine Hindi or Western Hindi dialects, like Braja-bhakha, Bundeli, and Khari-boli, as well as Dakni (the Western Hindi and Punjabi dialects which were established in the Deccan by the Muslim conquerors from Delhi and Punjab areas from the fourteenth century onwards), but also the literatures of Early Punjabi, of Awadhi (which belongs to the Kosala group of speeches), of Bhojpuri and Maithili (which are the languages of the Bihari group), of Marwari and other Rajasthani dialects (as, for example, in the poems of Mīrābāī of Chitore), etc.

Contiguous to the Punjabi and Hindi areas is the tract of Rajasthan, Malwa, and Gujarat. Here, a number of dialects are spoken, such as Marwari in its various forms, Dhundhari or Jaypuri, Mewari, and Malavi. There is a little literature in Jaypuri. Closely connected with the Marwari form of Rajasthani is Gujarati. Up to A.D. 1600, Marwari and Gujarati formed virtually one language ; but the people of Gujarat cultivated their own speech and made it an important literary language of modern India. The Marwaris developed a new literary speech known as Dingal, but, gradually, along with the speakers of other forms of Rajasthani and Malavi, they came under the spell of Braja-bhakha and Hindi, and have accepted Hindi as their literary language. At present, some enthusiasm is seen in favour of reviving Marwari as a new literary form of Rajasthani, as a language for Rajasthan. The dialects of Bhili and Khandeshi are connected with Rajasthani, and these are not cultivated. Khandeshi is much mixed

up with Marathi. In Cutch, the local dialect is a form of Sindhi, but the upper classes cultivate Gujarati. One form of Rajasthani is found in the Punjab and Kashmir among tribes known as the Gujars, descended from the ancient Gurjaras, who are semi-nomadic herdsmen and shepherds. Another form of Rajasthani-Gujarati, known as Saurastri, is the language of a considerable community of weavers and tradesmen settled in the Telugu and Tamil lands of the South; these Saurastri speakers are now trying to revive and establish their dialect for literary purposes.

East of the Western Hindi area, we have the tract of Eastern Hindi dialects for which a better name is Kosali. These include Awadhi or Baiswari, the language of Awadh (or Kosala, to give its ancient name), Bagheli or Baghelkhandi, and Chattisgarhi of eastern Madhya Pradesh (the ancient Dakṣiṇa Kosala or Mahā-Kosala). Kosali, in its Awadhi form, has given to India one of her greatest medieval poets and religious men, namely, Tulasīdāsa, regarded as one of the supreme poets in Hindi, taking Hindi in its wider, all-inclusive sense.

Further to the east, we have the Eastern or Magadhan dialects, all of which are believed to have sprung ultimately from the Māgadhī Prakrit. These Magadhan dialects fall into three groups: (*a*) Western (Bhojpuri and Sadani or Chota-Nagpuri); (*b*) Central (Maithili of North Bihar and Magahi of South Bihar, i.e. Patna, Gaya, and Hazaribagh Districts); and (*c*) Eastern (Assamese, Bengali, and Oriya). While the speakers of the Western and Central groups have now accepted Hindi as their literary language, and are studying and cultivating it, the three Eastern Magadhan speeches have each developed the status of an independent language. Of these, Bengali has an importance which requires more than a passing mention. It is current among more than 53 million people, and is a highly developed and subtle language, with a rich literature. It is able to express ancient and modern thought with ease and elegance. The nineteenth and twentieth centuries produced an array of brilliant writers in Bengali, who made it the foremost language in India, and Rabindranath Tagore, unquestionably one of the greatest literary figures of the world, employed Bengali in his writings and only latterly English. Assamese is spoken by some 2 millions only, and is very closely related to Bengali—in fact, Old Assamese and Old Bengali formed practically one language. But because Assam remained a Hindu State almost all through, and was the meeting ground of the Mongoloid peoples and the Aryans, Assamese has had an independent history, with its remarkable Burañjis or historical literature and its literature of Vaiṣṇava inspiration initiated by the great Śaṅkara Deva and others in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Oriya also resembles Bengali very much, but its written character, which has deviated largely from the common

alphabet used in early times throughout the whole of eastern India (eastern Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Nepal, Assam, Bengal, and Orissa) from the fifteenth century onwards, makes it look different from its immediate sisters. Its literature is expressive of the history and culture of Orissa as a Hindu kingdom, which maintained its independence against the Mohammedan rulers of Bengal and the Deccan up to the second half of the sixteenth century.

There now remain two other groups of the New Indo-Aryan languages to be considered. We have in the North the Himalayan or Pahari group, in three sub-groups: (*a*) Western Himalayan, consisting of a large number of small dialects like Chameali, Kului, Sirmauri, Jaunsari, Kiunthali, Mandeali, etc., speakers of which are all taking to Hindi as their literary language; (*b*) Central Himalayan, consisting of the two speeches, Garhwali and Kumauni, now equally giving their allegiance to Hindi; and (*c*) Eastern Himalayan, consisting of Gorkhali or Parbatiya or Nepali, the official language of Nepal. It was established by the Gurkhas in Nepal, and it flourishes as an independent language, though allied to Hindi.

In the South, we have a group represented by Marathi (its standard form being the language of Poona), with a well-developed literature, Konkani of Goa and the Bombay coast, which is virtually a form of Marathi (the Goanese dialect of it employing the Roman character and the Portuguese way of spelling), and Halba (an uncultivated dialect, much mixed with Chattisgarhi and Oriya, current in the Bastar region in Madhya Pradesh).

There are two other branches of the New Indo-Aryan speeches current outside India. One is Sinhalese, spoken by some two-thirds of the people of Ceylon, with its offshoot, Maldivan, the language of the Maldive Islands. Sinhalese appears to have been taken to the island by the Indian emigrants from Kathiawar and South Sind, as far back as the sixth century B.C., according to one early tradition. Then there is the group of Gipsy dialects found in Persia, Armenia, Palestine, and all over Europe. These have a literature of folk-songs, but otherwise they have not been much cultivated. They are descended from a Prakrit speech from north-western India, which spread out during the closing centuries of the first millennium B.C. Their agreement with Hindi and other New Indo-Aryan languages is remarkable.

II. THE DRAVIDIAN LANGUAGES

It is rather surprising that the Dravidian languages, which are current among about 70 million people, have not developed a common medium or linking language among themselves, like Hindi among the speakers of Aryan. In ancient and medieval times, Sanskrit, and sometimes the Prakrits, formed this inter-lingual link. At the present day, Hindi is widely

understood in the South, but the spread of English in the urban areas of Dravidian India is quite remarkable.

Of the Dravidian languages, Telugu, with 26 millions, is spoken by the largest number. It is a mellifluous language, and it has been described as 'the Italian of the East'. Its literary history commences from the tenth century A.D. Kannada is a language with a long history, although it is spoken by a little over 10 millions. Its oldest specimens are in the form of a few sentences spoken by some Indian characters in a Greek drama, manuscript fragments of which, dating from the second century A.D., have been found in Egypt. There is a series of inscriptions in Kannada dating from the sixth century A.D., and its literature commences from the ninth. The language discloses two stages in its history—the Old or Early Kannada (Paḷe-gannaḍa or Haḷe-gannaḍa) and Middle and Modern Kannada (Hosa-gannaḍa).

Tamil, current among some 23 to 24 millions in India, Ceylon, and abroad, is, in a way, the representative Dravidian speech, in that it has preserved the spirit of the Dravidian in a purer form than the other speeches of the same family. Genuine Dravidian roots and words have been very largely preserved in Tamil ; it was not influenced by Sanskrit to the same extent as Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam were. Yet, it has a large Aryan element, though Sanskrit words are not generally preserved in their correct form, owing to the peculiar phonetic system of Tamil.[5] Not a few words considered pure Dravidian are really transformed Sanskrit words. Tamil has the oldest and the most independent type of literature among the Dravidian languages, and the beginnings of this literature go back to the centuries round about the birth of Christ, although Tamil orthography and the fixing or standardization of the Old Tamil (Cen-Tamiz) took place only some centuries later. In originality and extent, and in reflecting the pre-Aryan Dravidian culture of the South, Old Tamil literature is remarkable. The early Tamil religious literature, as in the devotional songs and poems of the *sittar* (*siddhas*) or Nāyanmārs, i.e. Śaiva saints, and of the Āzhvārs (Āḷvārs) or Vaiṣṇava devotees, forms one of the greatest and most precious records in the domain of Indian spiritual experience. Malayalam, spoken by some 9 millions, is really an offshoot of Old Tamil, and it started as an independent language only from the fifteenth century. More than its elder sister Tamil and the other Dravidian languages, Malayalam favours pure Sanskrit words. It has a very vigorous literary life.

The other Dravidian languages of India are uncultivated speeches which never developed an advanced literary life, as the peoples speaking them were

[5] It would be difficult to spot Sanskrit *'sahasram'* (one thousand) in Tamil *'āyiram'* (*sahasram* = *sahasiram* = *sāsiram* = *āyiram*) ; *sneha* (ghee) in *ney* ; or Kṛṣṇa in Kiruṭṭiṇan.

backward. Among these, we have Tulu (152,000) allied to Kannada, Kodagu (45,000) of Coorg, and Toda (600) near Ootacamund in the South, besides a few others ; the great Gondi dialect of North Deccan current among nearly two million people, but split up through the spread of Hindi dialects, Marathi, and Telugu within Gondi territory ; Kui or Kandh (586,000) in Orissa ; Kurukh or Oraon (1,038,000) in Chota Nagpur ; Maler or Malpahari (71,000) in the Rajmahal Hills ; and Brahui (207,000) in Baluchistan, which has come to be influenced by Balochi, Persian, and Sindhi. The ultimate passing away of these uncultivated Dravidian languages appears to be inevitable.

III. THE AUSTRIC LANGUAGES

The Austric languages are now spoken by some 5 million people in central and eastern India classed as Adivasis or aboriginals. The original Austric language, believed to have taken form in India, falls into two great groups: (1) Austro-Asiatic and (2) Austro-Nesian. At the present day, they are current from central India through Burma, Indo-China, Malaya, and the islands of the Indian Archipelago, right through to the Eastern Pacific, Hawaii Islands, and New Zealand. The Austric languages in India, like most other Austric speeches prevailing on the continent of Asia in the south-east, are of the Austro-Asiatic branch. They belong largely to the Kol or Munda group, of which the most important are Santali, Mundari, Ho, Birhor, Bhumij, Kurku, Sabara, and Gadaba. Besides, we have Nicobarese, spoken by about 10,000 people in the Nicobar Islands ; and Khasi in Assam, spoken by some 234,000, which is related immediately to the Mon-Khmer group, current in Burma, Indo-China, and Malaya.

The Santals represent the largest group of Austro-Asiatic speakers in India, numbering between 2·5 and 3 millions, and are the largest single aboriginal group in the Indian body politic. They are scattered over Chota Nagpur and Bihar, Orissa, western and northern Bengal, and Assam, with a few solid blocks only in the Santal Parganas. They have a remarkable literature of folk-tales and songs, but as their solidarity has been split up, they are forced to learn local languages like Bengali, Oriya, the Bihari dialects, and Assamese, and ultimately their merging into Aryan-speaking neighbours is inevitable, unless a strong national or cultural movement, aided by the governments, is fostered. The same may be said of the Mundas (650,000), speaking Mundari with their centre at Ranchi, the Hos in Singhbhum (450,000), and of the other lesser tribes mentioned above. At one time, these Austric-speaking or Niṣāda tribes extended over the whole of North India, probably from Kashmir right up to Burma, and they spread further to the south and east ; they were also to be found in South India.

But now we find just a few islands of Austric speech in central and eastern India and in the southern slopes of the Himalayas, in and to the west of Nepal, where a few Mongoloid dialects that have supplanted the Austric dialects show some characteristics of the latter.

IV. THE MONGOLOID LANGUAGES

We come finally to the Mongoloids of India, the Kirātas, a people resembling in their features the well-known 'Mongol' peoples of Central, North, and Western Asia—those speaking the Sino-Tibetan, Ural-Altaic, and Hyperborean languages, like the Chinese, the Siamese, the Burmese, and the Tibetans, on the one hand, and the Turks, the Mongols, the Manchus, and peoples like the Koreans, the Japanese, the Kamchadals, etc., on the other. It seems likely that, from at least the beginning of the first millennium B.C., Kirāta tribes, infiltrating themselves from the east through Assam, occupied the southern slopes of the Himalayas as far west as the Punjab, and gradually spread to the plains of North Bihar and North Bengal, and also to East Bengal and Assam. The Newars in Nepal quite early adopted an Indian alphabet, although they retained their own Tibeto-Burman language. They preserved the Sanskrit literature of Mahāyāna Buddhism, and built up a great art on foundations received from Bengal and Bihar. The Bodos, another important tribe of the Indo-Mongoloids, at one time occupied the whole of North and East Bengal and the Brahmaputra valley. Now their language has been split up and is in fragments, while as a people they have largely merged into the Bengali and Assamese speakers.

At the present day, the Kirāta speeches in India can be classified into the following groups: (1) the Bodo group, represented by the Tipras of Tripura State, the Garos, the Dimasa or Kachharis, and various small groups like the Chutias, the Rabhas, the Meches, and the Koches in Assam and North Bengal. The Christian missionaries have sought to preserve Garo, but the other forms of Bodo speech are fast disappearing. (2) The Naga group, which is closely related to the Bodo, is confined to less than one lakh of people, and has nearly a score of dialects which are frequently mutually unintelligible, so that Assamese, in some places, forms a lingua franca among the Nagas. (3) The Kuki-Chin languages, spoken in the area south of the Naga Hills, the most important of which is Manipuri or Meithei, the official language of the State of Manipur, which is now current among about 4 lakhs of people. It is written in Bengali characters, and there is a growing literature in it. It may be noted here that Khasi, the next important non-Aryan language in East India, although spoken by a Kirāta people, is really a speech of the Austric family. (4) Mikir, spoken in the region to the south of the Brahmaputra between the Khasi and Naga Hills, is closely allied to

Naga and Kuki-Chin. (5) The North Assam group, spoken by small tribes in the Himalayan slopes north of the Brahmaputra, like Abor, Miri, Aka, and Dafla, as well as Mishmi. (6) The various dialects of Sikkim, Darjeeling, and Nepal, among which the only cultivated speeches are Newari of Nepal and Lepcha of Sikkim and Darjeeling areas. These are gradually yielding before the Nepali. (7) Besides the above, Bhutanese and Sikkimese in the east and the language of Lahoul and Ladakh in the west are really forms of Tibetan, which have been brought to India by Tibetan immigrants in recent centuries.

Over and above the languages belonging to the above four families, we have to mention the Burushaski or Khazuna language, spoken by some 26,000 people in Hunza and Nagyr, north of Kashmir. It stands by itself, and no connection with any other speech family, current within India or outside, has been established with this language, though its connection with the Caucasic Georgian or Gresinin has been suggested. Burushaski is somehow holding its own, but as the people speaking it have accepted Islam, it is now coming more and more under the influence of Persian and other Iranian languages which are dominant in that area.

OTHER FOREIGN LANGUAGES CURRENT IN INDIA

In any consideration of the languages of India, we should not omit Persian, Arabic, and English. Although these languages are not native to the country, yet they have been studied by hundreds and thousands of Indians for centuries as languages of culture and religion, administration and education. Arabic and Persian are what have been regarded as 'Islamic' languages, and English, for the last century and a half at least, in addition to its being the language of administration, has been the medium for the progressive modernization of the Indian mind. With the restriction of the power of Islam in India, Persian and Arabic are losing their former pre-eminence, and the emergence of India as an independent country will, perhaps, make the use of English much more restricted. Persian exerted a tremendous influence upon its cousin speeches in North India during the last 600 years, and Arabic had some indirect influence, mainly in the matter of vocabulary, through Persian. English has been, similarly, influencing all the languages of India, not only as to vocabulary in administration and science, but also in idiom and syntax.

THE SPECIAL POSITION OF SANSKRIT

We may conclude this brief survey of the languages in India with a reference to the special position that Sanskrit occupies in the history and culture of India. Ever since the formation of the Hindu or Indian people,

centuries before Christ, the Sanskrit language became inextricably linked up with this people as the repository and expression of their life and thought. Taking a sober view of Hindu antiquity, Sanskrit has served the Indian people for more than three thousand years. From the Vedas onwards right down to the present age, the Sanskrit tradition in the Indian scene has remained uninterrupted; and in spite of the evil days on which Sanskrit, like all purely intellectual and cultural studies, has fallen, the Sanskrit tradition still continues to be effective within its own sphere.

In considering Sanskrit, we have to note two great facts so far as the present-day India is concerned. Firstly, Sanskrit has been, and still continues to be, the one great unifying factor for the people of India. India is a multiracial and a polyglot country, and in spite of a basic Indianism which embraces all, there is a bewildering diversity (though in non-essentials) in the spiritual approach of the Indian peoples. But the basic character of India, her great all India background, her *Indianism*, her *Bhārata-dharma*, or *Bhārata-yāna*, is linked up with Sanskrit.

There are over a dozen important languages now current among the people of India, some of which are spoken by millions and millions of people. On the basis of languages as one of the fundamentals of nationalism, particularly of the modern type, it would have been quite easy and just in the nature of things for the people of India to have split up into a number of distinct nations, each with its own language. But transcending the diversity of language is the cultural unity which is shared in by all the various linguistic communities of India through Sanskrit. With the development of Prakrits on the one hand and the use of the Dravidian languages for literature on the other, and particularly with the strong feeling for their regional languages which is now becoming so very evident in the Indian scene in recent years, especially after Independence, certain fissiparous tendencies, jeopardizing the unity of India as a single cultural and political unit, are coming to the surface as a most disturbing thing in Indian life and politics. Sanskrit and Sanskrit alone can effectively meet this danger as it has created a single Indian culture and civilization. The primary importance of Sanskrit in not only maintaining, but also strengthening Indian cultural and political unity is comparable to the rôle which the Chinese system of writing plays in keeping intact the cultural and political unity of China, for China is, as much as India, a land of many languages which are generally incorrectly described as *dialects*.

Apart from this very vital matter, Sanskrit is a great treasure-house for all Indian literary languages to draw their words of higher culture from. Modern Indian literary languages, whether Aryan or Dravidian, are no longer 'building languages', i.e. they do not create new words with their own native

elements. With Sanskrit in the background and being nurtured in the bosom of Sanskrit, they have all become 'borrowing languages'. Any word in a Sanskrit book or in the Sanskrit dictionary is a prospective Bengali or Telugu, Marathi or Malayalam word. The much-needed development of scientific and technological vocabulary will mean a greater and still greater place for Sanskrit in modern Indian intellectual and cultural life. Further, Sanskrit, though it is not a spoken language of any region or group of people, as other regional languages are, is widely understood and is still used in speeches on special occasions and in conferences, as well as in religio-philosophical discussions in orthodox circles. There are a considerable number of people who can read and write Sanskrit with ease, and many of them speak it fluently. There are also a few Sanskrit journals, and works continue to be produced in Sanskrit. Thus, Sanskrit is a still dynamic, current language. These and many other weighty reasons will make the place of Sanskrit so very vital in India, a place which far transcends in extent and depth that of Greek and Latin for Europe.

The rôle of Sanskrit in the lands of Greater India is also well known. About A.D. 500, if a man could speak Sanskrit, thanks to Brāhmaṇism and Buddhism being spread over half of Asia, he could easily make his way from Western Asia, through India, Ceylon, Burma, Siam, and Indo-China right down through the islands of Indonesia, on the one hand, and from Tibet and China to Korea and Japan, on the other. The Sanskrit leaven has been very potent not only in all these lands, i.e. Burma, Siam, Cambodia, Laos, Champa, Malaya, Sumatra, Java, and Bali, but also in other important cultural areas of Asia, viz. China with Korea and Japan. In the eastern Arab world and also in Iran, Afghanistan, and Central Asia, during the early centuries of the development of Islamic culture, Sanskrit had an important rôle to play. The discovery of Sanskrit by Europe, since the great announcement of Sir William Jones in 1786, in the Asiatic Society of Calcutta, of its affinity to European languages, has brought in a revolution in our approach to the study of the origin and history of the human race by rehabilitating the primitive Indo-European world and all its remifications. This is a matter, however, which takes us beyond the immediate scope of a consideration of the languages of India.

However, it is clear that Sanskrit has still a great and dynamic part to play both in the national as well as international fields, and if recognized as the national language for India and developed on modern lines may yet serve as a language of culture and science, at least to India, Farther India, and other South-East Asian countries which were at one time under the sway of Sanskrit.

II

WRITING IN INDIA: INDIAN ALBHABETS

The art of writing goes back to a very ancient time in India, but although there are many specimens of writing, beginning from prehistoric times, we are not in a position to utilize them, as these have still remained a sealed book to us. Leaving aside the various marks on pottery and on implements which have been found in the prehistoric remains in the Deccan and South India, and also certain problematic inscriptions in eastern part of central India, which may or may not be real writing, we may say that a system of writing was current already among the people who built up the prehistoric Indus valley civilization of Mohenjo-daro and Harappā. Among the most characteristic remains of this ancient civilization of India are quite a large number of inscribed seals, on which a few letters of an unknown script occur. The various signs that occur on seals available so far have been listed, and certain conclusions have been arrived at about the likely character or nature of this writing. But, unfortunately, the absence of a bilingual text has prevented any effective decipherment of the seals so far.

From Mohenjo-daro and Harappā (*c.* 2500-1500 B.C.) to the Maurya period (about 300 B.C.) is a big jump; yet we have no vestiges of writing in between. In the pre-Aśokan and Aśokan inscriptions, we find a fully developed system of writing, in which the Aryan dialects, then current in North India, are found to be written. This script, named Brāhmī,[6] is a full and perfectly legible alphabet, and it is the oldest alphabet that we can associate with the Aryan languages of India. Of course, the language used in old inscriptions (of Maurya times) in this script is mainly forms of Middle Indo-Aryan or Prakrit, and only in a few comparatively later specimens (e.g. the Ghosundi stone inscription of about the second half of the first century B.C., the Ayodhya stone inscription of Dhanadeva of about the first century A.D., and the Junagad rock inscription of Rudradāman of the second century A.D.), do we find Sanskrit used. But, as a matter of fact, this Brāhmī alphabet, which was current in about A.D. 300 throughout the greater part of India, was employed to write not only the Prakrit vernaculars of the period, but also Sanskrit, including the Vedic, as we can quite reasonably presume. This Brāhmī script is the national alphabet of India, the unbroken development of which we find from about 300 B.C. down to our day.

[6] The name 'Brāhmī' was applied to the script rather arbitrarily; nevertheless, it seems to be correct. The name figures in a very early list of alphabets current in India which is given in the *Lalitavistara*, a very old biography of the Buddha.

There is another alphabet found in use in India in the Maurya period and for some subsequent centuries; this is the Kharoṣṭhī script.[7] This script was confined to the north-west of India, and it differed from the Brāhmī in some important respects. Brāhmī was written from left to right (it is supposed originally it was written in the *boustrophedon* style), while Kharoṣṭhī writing went from right to left. Then, again, Kharoṣṭhī did not indicate the long vowels. However, both of them did not write the vowels in full when they came after the consonants. The shapes of the letters in the two scripts were in the same style—they were very simple; but while the Brāhmī letters stood straight, the Kharoṣṭhī ones were slightly slanted.

The Kharoṣṭhī script never took root in the Indian soil, although it had a flourishing time in writing Indian dialects throughout the Punjab and North-West Frontier Province, and was taken to Khotan by the Indian colonists who settled there in the third century B.C. By third century, Kharoṣṭhī may be said to have become extinct in India although it continued for another two centuries in Khotan.

The Brāhmī script, however, has lived on, and the various modern scripts of India, including those of a number of lands of Greater India, are only derivatives of it. Thus the Devanāgarī, the Bengali-Assamese-Maithili-Newari-Oriya, the Śāradā-Gurumukhi, the Kaithi-Gujarati, the Telugu-Kannada, and the Tamil-Malayalam-Grantha-Sinhalese, as also the Tibetan, the Mon-Burmese, the Cambodian-Siamese, the Javanese-Balinese, and a number of allied scripts in Indonesia—all these are transformations of the Brāhmī script.

Thanks to the labours of the last three generations of epigraphists, the history of the development of Brāhmī within and outside India is quite clear. But the origin of Brāhmī as a script is as yet unsolved. The knowledge of Brāhmī as a script was lost to India, because successive generations of people were familiar with the later or more modern phases of it, as current in their times, and nobody studied the ancient documents. It was to the credit of an English scholar, James Prinsep, that we are now enabled to read fluently the Brāhmī script. Prinsep, in 1837, first read the Brāhmī script, and in this he received help from bilingual coins of the Greek rulers of north-western India, in which their names and titles were given in both

[7] The name 'Kharoṣṭhī' is looked upon as being derived from the Sanskrit words '*khara*' (ass) and '*oṣṭha*' (lip), because the letters had a fancied resemblance to the lips of an ass. This is the traditional view. Sylvain Lévi, however, suggested that the word really came from *khara* and *uṣṭra* (camel)—which gave in Prakrit *kharoṣṭha* and *karoṭṭha*, meaning 'the script of the land of the ass and camel', i.e. the Punjab and North-West Frontier, where these two animals predominate as beasts of burden. A third interpretation is that the word '*kharoṣṭhī*' is derived from the Semitic word '*kharosheth*', which means 'writing', and that this script is an Indian modification of a Semitic (Syrian) system of writing which was widely prevalent in the Achaeminian empire in those early centuries.

Greek letters and in Prakrit in Brāhmī letters. He achieved a great epigraphic triumph when he gave the first reading of the edicts of Aśoka written in Brāhmī. A similar method, in the case of some Maurya inscriptions, which gave virtually the same text in slightly differing dialects in Brāhmī and Kharoṣṭhī, has enabled us to read the latter.

ORIGIN OF THE BRAHMI SCRIPT

When European scholars first tackled Brāhmī, they gradually formed the opinion that it was a derivative ultimately of the ancient Phoenician alphabet of about 1200 B.C., which came either in a northern form directly into India, or in a southern form as it had developed in South Arabia. It was suggested by them that there was no system of writing known to ancient Indians, whether Aryan or pre-Aryan, and that Indian merchants who went for trade to Mesopotamia and South Arabia got the idea of writing from the Semitic peoples of these lands and applied it to the writing of Prakrit dialects and Sanskrit; and this could have only taken place by 500 B.C., giving us finally the finished Brāhmī alphabet of the Maurya times. A certain similarity between the shapes of the Brāhmī letters and those of the oldest Phoenician alphabet, both standing for the same or similar sounds, gave considerable support to this theory.

But the discovery of the Mohenjo-daro writing has called for a revision of the view that India was indebted to the Semitic world for her script. It has been found that quite a number of symbols occurring in the Mohenjo-daro writing have resemblance to the letters of the Brāhmī alphabet. Moreover, the Brāhmī principle of tagging on the vowel signs to the consonant letters seems also to have been in use in the Mohenjo-daro script. We can distinguish several stages in the evolution of this old and prehistoric Sind-Punjab writing—a pictorial and hieroglyphic, a syllabic, and then a much more simplified linear form which was probably alphabetical.

It is exceedingly likely that the Brāhmī alphabet is just a modification of the Sind-Punjab script in its later phase. This Sind-Punjab script was in a flourishing stage before the Aryans came, that is, before *c.* 1500 B.C. The Aryans, probably, had no system of writing of their own, although they had occasion to come in touch with this great invention of civilization in Asia Minor and Mesopotamia. After they settled down on the soil of India, a modified form of the late Sind-Punjab script was in all likelihood adopted to write the Aryan language, which was at that time a kind of late Vedic Sanskrit. This adoption would appear to have taken place by *c.* 1000 B.C., which alone made possible the compilation of the mass of Vedic literature, so long current orally, into four written compilations, the four Vedas, which Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa is traditionally said to have accomplished. Vyāsa

was an older contemporary of the heroes of the *Mahābhārata*; and the Mahābhārata war, according to Pargiter and H. C. Raychaudhuri, who followed quite different methods in working out the date, took place in the middle of the tenth century B.C., so that we would not be wrong in assuming that a proto-Brāhmī was established by *c.* 900 B.C., and this became the finished Brāhmī of *c.* 300 B.C. Even in Maurya Brāhmī, we find the script still hesitating in certain matters and not fully established as a system of writing—it did not know how to indicate properly double and conjunct consonants. The perfection of the Brāhmī alphabet as a worthy medium for Sanskrit, with its scientific and accurate orthography, would appear to have taken place as late as the early centuries of the Christian era.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE BRAHMI SCRIPT

The subsequent history of the Brāhmī, throughout the centuries, is a specialized subject of study, and we can give here only the broad lines of its development. About 200 B.C., there was a pan-Indian unity in script through the use of Brāhmī, barring, of course, the North-West which ordinarily, though not entirely, used Kharoṣṭhī. South India used a form of Brāhmī in which the inherent '*a*' of the consonants was indicated by a special mark. Brāhmī was gradually changed to the Kuṣāṇa scripts of the first and second centuries A.D.; and under the Gupta emperors, it developed two styles, one monumental, used in cutting inscriptions, and the other cursive or written, used in writing on palm-leaf, birch-bark, or leather. Differentiation between the North and the South slowly crept in; and whenever there was want of a centralized administration, local varieties of the Brāhmī script began to assert themselves, giving rise to regional forms of the same alphabet. In the early centuries of the Christian era, cursive or manuscript Brāhmī was taken to Central Asia, and was employed to write new languages like Old Khotanese and Tokharian (or Kuchean). It also passed on to Indo-China and Indonesia, where it was at first employed to write Sanskrit, and then its use was extended to local languages like Javanese, Malay, Balinese, Achenese Battak, and some of the Filipino speeches in Indonesia; Cham Khmer and Siamese in Indo-China; and Mon, Pyu, and Burmese in Burma.

During the time of Harṣavardhana, there was, on the whole, a unity of script, at least for the whole of North India, the script then used (Siddhamātṛka) representing the final phase of an undivided Brāhmī in North India. It is this script which the Chinese, Koreans, and Japanese still use for writing Sanskrit, as also in occasional inscriptions, names, and *bīja-mantras*. After the death of Harṣa, the script gradually took three pronounced regional forms in North India: (1) Śāradā or North-Western, (2) Śrī Harṣa or South-

Western and West Midland, and (3) Kuṭila or Eastern. The Śāradā form was used in Kashmir, and early medieval Kashmir manuscripts in Sanskrit are in this script. This Śāradā script was virtually abandoned by the Kashmir people, when large masses of them were converted to Islam in the fifteenth century, and the little knowledge of Śāradā, which was never put in type, is confined to the Kashmir Brāhmaṇas, who, too, at the present day, commonly use Devanāgarī for Sanskrit. A number of local scripts allied to Śāradā were in use in the Western Himalayan Hindu States, like Landa (among the *banias* of the Punjab and Sind), Takki or Takri, Chameali, etc. The Gurumukhi character, in which the Sikhs write Punjabi, is based on Śāradā, but it is profoundly modified by Devanāgarī.

The Śrī Harṣa type developed in Gujarat, Rajasthan, and western U.P. This has given us the Devanāgarī of modern times, which was made the pan-Indian script for Sanskrit in the last century, and has come into great prominence as the representative modern script of India. An abbreviated form of Devanāgarī, known as Kaithi, is in use in Bihar and U.P., and a similar form of simplified Devanāgarī has become the current Gujarati script. Marathi was formerly written in the Moḍi script, originally a Deccan modification of the Brāhmī, but during the last 150 years Devanāgarī virtually replaced it, Devanāgarī being known as Bāla-bodha in the Marathi-speaking tracts.

The Kuṭila form of late Brāhmī was current in eastern U.P., Bihar, Nepal, Assam, Bengal, and Orissa. The Devanāgarī script has virtually replaced it in eastern U.P., Bihar, and Nepal, although the Maithili form of Kuṭila and the Newari form are still lingering. Bengali, Assamese, and Maithili formed practically one script, and a development of it is Oriya.

In the Deccan and South India, we note two other main groups: One is the Telugu-Kannada group, Telugu and Kannada forming practically two styles of the same form of the Deccan Brāhmī. The other group is the Tamil-Malayalam-Grantha. The Tamil language became very much simplified in its phonetics by about A.D. 500, and those who were responsible for the grammatical and the linguistic study of Tamil at that time simplified the current alphabet for Tamil. Thus we have the peculiar character of the Tamil writing which ignores the second, third, and fourth letters of each *varga* and has no sibilant proper. But the full Brāhmī alphabet continued to be used for writing Sanskrit by the Tamil people, and this forms the Grantha script. Malayalam belongs to the same Tamil-Grantha group. The current Sinhalese alphabet is derived from the Grantha as taken to the island by the Tamilians.

Two other modifications of the Indian alphabet may be mentioned for the sake of the completion of our survey. One is the Lepcha or Rong,

already put in type by the Christian missionaries, and it is used to write the Lepcha language in Darjeeling and Sikkim. It is believed to be a modified form of the Tibetan, which itself originated from India in the seventh century A.D. from the alphabet current in Kashmir. The other is the old Manipuri alphabet. This has now fallen into disuse, being replaced by the Bengali script, as the letters of the old Manipuri script are complicated. Its exact affiliation is not clear. The Ahoms, a Sino-Tibetan tribe allied to the Shans and Siamese, brought their own alphabet from Burma (a modification of South Indian Brāhmī) when they came to Assam in 1228. They retained the alphabet for some centuries, but now their language and the alphabet are both dead, as the Ahoms have merged among the Aryan-speaking Assamese people.

Besides the above scripts derived from Brāhmī, the Perso-Arabic script is employed in India to write Urdu as well as Kashmiri and Sindhi, and the Roman script has been applied for writing a variety of tribal dialects.

APPENDIX

1951 CENSUS FIGURES FOR INDIA

The population of undivided India in 1931 was 338 millions, and in 1951 it was about 438 millions (362 for India and 76 for Pakistan). The numbers of speakers of different Indian languages in 1951 were as follows:

I. SPEAKERS OF PRINCIPAL INDIAN LANGUAGES ENUMERATED IN THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION

(a) *Indo-Aryan*: Hindi, Urdu, Hindustani, and Punjabi, 149,944,311;[*] Marathi 27,049,522; Bengali 25,121,674; Gujarati 16,310,771; Oriya 13,153,909; Assamese 4,988,226; Sanskrit 555.

(b) *Dravidian*: Telugu 32,999,916; Tamil 26,546,764; Kannada 14,471,764; Malayalam 13,380,109.

II. LANGUAGES OR DIALECTS WITH SPEAKERS NUMBERING A LAKH OR OVER

(a) *Indo-Aryan*: Marwari 4,514,737; Mewari 2,014,874; Dhundhari or Jaipuri 1,588,069; Bagri 926,029; Chattisgarhi 902,908; Malvi 866,895; Harauti 815,859; Sindhi 745,434; Rajasthani 645,001; Konkani 639,020; Kumauni 571,401; Garhwali 484,261; Ajmeri 463,161; Nepali 421,688;

[*] This figure really includes speakers of Maithili, Magahi, Bhojpuri, and Kosali in its various forms; Garhwali, Kumauni, and other Himalayan speeches; and Rajasthani, who have all been included here under 'Hindi' speakers.

Halbi 264,912 ; Nimari 180,696 ; Braj-bhakha 177,847 ; Saurashtri 124,486 ; Mewati 111,083 ; Khatria 110,592 ; Nimadi 110,577.

(b) *Dravidian*: Tulu 787,624.

(c) *Austric*: Bhumij 101,508.

(d) *Mongoloid*: Tripura 129,379.

III. TRIBAL LANGUAGES OR DIALECTS WITH SPEAKERS NUMBERING A LAKH OR OVER

(a) *Indo-Aryan*: Bhili 1,160,299 ; Lambadi 628,166 ; Vagdi 516,991 ; Banjari or Labhani 332,317 ; Bhilali 264,289.

(b) *Dravidian*: Gondi 1,232,886 ; Oraon 644,042 ; Kondh 280,561 ; Kui 206,509 ; Paraja (Parji) 146,938 ; Maria 140,583 ; Koya 137,358.

(c) *Austric*: Santali 2,811,578 ; Ho 599,876 ; Mundari, Munda, etc. 585,211 ; Savara 256,259 ; Khasi 230,982 ; Korku 170,607.

(d) *Mongoloid*: Meithei (Manipuri) 485,787 ; Garo 239,816 ; Boro Bodo 166,447 ; Lushei 163,600 ; Mikir 130,746.

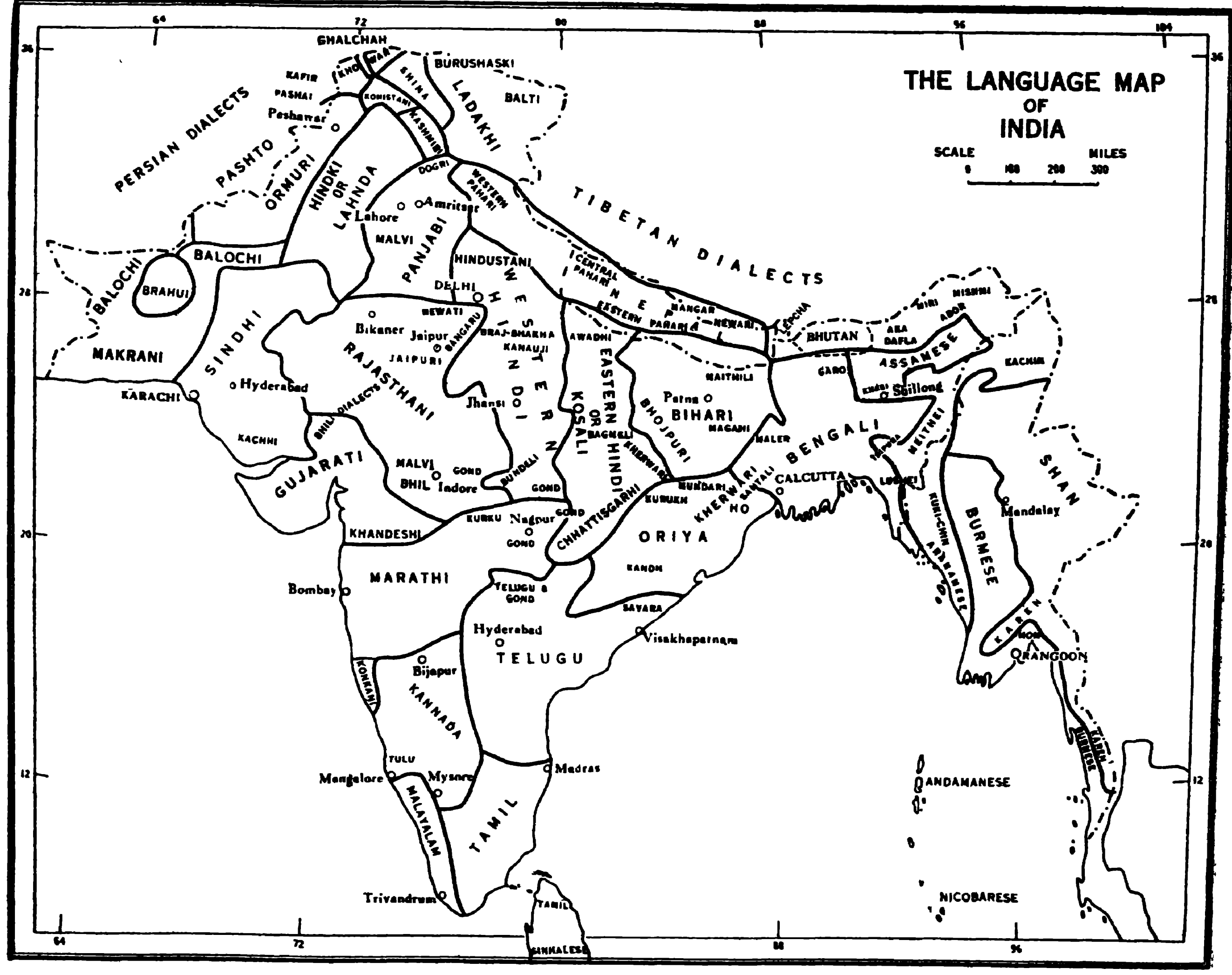
IV. OTHER INDIAN LANGUAGES OR DIALECTS WITH SPEAKERS NUMBERING LESS THAN A LAKH

Total number of languages or dialects	720
Number of speakers	2,860,974

V. PRINCIPAL NON-INDIAN LANGUAGE SPEAKERS

English 171,742 ; Persian 11,814 ; Chinese (mostly Cantonese) 9,214 ; Arabic 7,914 ; Portuguese 6,652 ; Burmese 3,955 ; Tibetan 2,494 ; French 1,929 ; German 1,665 ; Hebrew 1,209 ; Malayan 703 ; Italian 685 ; Sinhalese 561.

Note: The figures for Kashmir, Nepal, and Pakistan are not included in the figures given above. In 1955 the population of Nepal, mainly speaking Nepali and Newari, was 8,600,000. The population of Jammu and Kashmir was estimated at 4,410,000 in 1951, of whom about 1·5 million speak Kashmiri, about 1 million speak Dogri in Jammu, and of the rest some speak Ladakhi, Balti, and forms of Tibetan, besides various speeches of the Dardic family, like Shina and 'Kafir' dialects. The population figures (in round numbers) for various divisions of Pakistan in 1951 were as follows: Baluchistan (mainly Balochi and Brahui) 1,174,000 ; East Bengal (Bengali) 42,000,000 ; Karachi (mainly Punjabi and Sindhi, with Urdu as official language) 1,126,000 ; N.W.F.P. and frontier regions and States (Pashto and the various dialects of Lahnda or Hindki) 5,900,000 ; Punjab (Punjabi, with Urdu as official language) 18,828,000 ; Bahawalpur (Punjabi) 1,823,000 ; Sind and Khairpur (Sindhi) 4,928,000.


THE LANGUAGE MAP
OF
INDIA
SCALE
MILES
0 100 200 300
GHALCHAH
BURUSHASKI
KAFIR
PASHAI
KOHISTANI
SHINA
KASHMIRI
LADAKHI
BALTI
Peshawar
PERSIAN DIALECTS
PASHTO
ORMURI
HINDKI OR LAHNDA
DOGRI
WESTERN PAHARI
Lahore
Amritsar
MALVI
PANJABI
TIBETAN DIALECTS
BALOCHI
BRAHUI
HINDUSTANI
CENTRAL PAHARI
DELHI
WESTERN HINDI
NEPALI
EASTERN PAHARI
NEWARI
LEPCHA
BHUTAN
MISHMI
MIRI
ABOR
AKA
DAFLA
ASSAMESE
MEWATI
Bikaner
Jaipur
BANGARU
BRAJ-BHAKHA
KANAUJI
JAIPURI
AWADHI
MAKRANI
SINDHI
RAJASTHANI
GARO
KHASI
Shillong
KACHIN
MAITHILI
Hyderabad
KARACHI
Patna
BIHARI
MAGAHI
Jhansi
KOSALI
EASTERN HINDI OR
BAGHELI
BHOJPURI
BHIL DIALECTS
KACHHI
MALER
BENGALI
MEITHEI
SHAN
MALVI
GOND
BHIL
Indore
BUNDELI
KHERWARI
SANTALI
CALCUTTA
LUSHEI
GUJARATI
MUNDARI
KURUKH
HO
KUKI-CHIN
Mandalay
BURMESE
KHANDESHI
KURKU
Nagpur
CHHATTISGARHI
ORIYA
ARAKANESE
KANDH
MARATHI
Bombay
TELUGU & GOND
SAVARA
Visakhapatnam
KAREN
MON
RANGOON
Hyderabad
TELUGU
KONKANI
Bijapur
KANNADA
TULU
Mangalore
Mysore
Madras
ANDAMANESE
MALAYALAM
TAMIL
NICOBARESE
Trivandrum
TAMIL
SINHALESE
64
72
80
88
96
104
36
28
20
12

5

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM DIFFERENT LANGUAGE-CULTURE GROUPS

THE Indian population is the product of an intimate miscegenation of a number of diverse races in their various ramifications, each of these races and some of their ramifications preserving a separate language and the culture connected with it. These peoples all came from outside, and the cultural *milieux* in which they had developed outside India naturally differed from each other owing to the original diversity of the racial, geographical, and economic backgrounds. But within this subcontinent, a more or less uniform economic background prevailed, and through fusion of blood the approximation to a common economic and cultural life was facilitated. The inevitable result was the gradual transformation of the people, originally with diverse mentalities and attitudes, into a singular and uniform type—particularly after the establishment of Brāhmaṇical Hinduism, when a single type of ideology came to be generally accepted. We are, at present, conscious of a common Indianness of outlook and attitude, although it would be very hard to define or characterize it. Sir Herbert Risley, who was a leading authority on Indian anthropology, admitted the existence of a 'certain underlying uniformity of life from the Himalayas to the Cape Comorin', and of a 'general Indian personality'.

UNITY OF INDIAN CULTURE

On the physical plane, leaving aside extreme types like a fair Kashmir Brāhmaṇa with the 'Aryan' type of physical build, or a Gurkha with pronounced Mongoloid features, or an Adivasi from eastern India with dark skin and snub nose and the so-called Niṣāda or Austric features, the average specimens of Indian humanity present a certain Indianness of type, easily distinguishable from the Iranian or the Indo-Chinese type. Except where a foreign system of clothing has been deliberately adopted, as among the people of the Punjab in recent generations, there developed a pan-Indian costume *par excellence*, consisting of three pieces of unsewn cloth, one wrapped round the waist as a *dhotī* or loin cloth or *sārī* (*adhovāsa, dhotra*, or *sāṭikā*), another as a cloth for the upper body (*uttarīya, avaveṣṭanī*, or *oḍhanī*), and a third for men to wrap round the head as a turban (*uṣṇīṣa*). Foreign influences have largely modified this. But even in the extreme north, in the Punjab, in Kashmir, and in Nepal, in spite of the cold climate,

a Brāhmaṇa or a person of the upper castes, when eating formally or ceremonially, will discard his everyday trousers and coat, and put on his *dhotī* and *uttarīya* when he would enter into the sanctum of his dining room.

The foreigners from the north-west, Persian-using Iranians and Turks, noticed that, instead of eating their bread or rice with meat, 'the Hindus (Indians) eat grain with grain, and call it *dāl-roṭī*' (*Hindūān ghalla-rā ba-ghalla mi-khordand, wa mi-goyand 'dāl-roṭī'*). The *dāl-roṭī* (unleavened bread and lentils) or *dāl-bhāt* (rice and lentils) remains symbolic of a pan-Indian economic base of life. With a thousand and one provincial differentiations, the basic tone of Indian food is the same: boiled rice or *capāṭīs*, pulses or lentils, and curry vegetables, with preserves or chutneys and milk preparations, like sour milk or rice milk, besides sweets cooked in butter. Meat also comes in, but only as a substitute for vegetable relishes, and it is not possible, from the nature of the Indian climate and the economic situation in India, for meat to be a staple food, as among the Mongols or the people of Argentina.

Food and raiment and other things of material life apart, the peculiar *cachet* of the Indian mind would appear to be connected with certain matters which transcend all forms of communal or provincial mentality. The unity in diversity, that is so characteristic of Indian civilization, presents a harmony of contrasts. This harmony is based on the following: a sense of unity of all life as the expression of an unseen Reality, which is both immanent and transcendent; a desire for synthesis, to combine apparently disconnected or discrepant fragments in life and experience in an essential unity; a rigid adherence to the intellect, while seeking to harmonize it with emotion; a recognition of the sufferings and sorrows of life, which goes hand in hand with an attempt to arrive at the root-causes and to remove those sorrows and sufferings; a feeling of sacredness of all life, which finds its expression in the negative doctrine of *ahiṁsā* or non-injury to all creatures and in the positive one of *karuṇā* and *maitrī*, i.e. active compassion and service; and, above all, a great tolerance for other beliefs and points of view.

Niṣāda and Kirāta, and Ārya and Drāviḍa—all combined to arrive at the above ideology, which suffuses the whole of Indian life and Indian attitude, transcending the original character of the basic language-culture groups. It is not possible to state categorically the mental attitude of each group. But where there is predominance of the basic element, whether Niṣāda or Kirāta or Drāviḍa, we may just infer or guess certain special traits, certain kinds of emphasis, not prominent elsewhere.

THE NEGROIDS

The oldest people who came to India as a distinct entity were the Negroids. They were in the lowest stratum of human culture, and they came in the eolithic stage of human civilization, when men were food-gatherers and not food-growers. Negroid features are found to be depicted in Indian art (both sculpture and painting, e.g. at Ajanta) right down to the seventh and eighth centuries. But now such traces are not commonly found, except among the Mongoloid Nagas in Assam, while a handful of Negroids are found in South Indian jungles, now speaking Dravidian dialects. It is only in the Andaman Islands that full-blooded Negroids, akin to those who originally came to India, are found. The actual contribution of the Negroid or Negrito in the evolution of the Indian temperament and the Indian way of thinking does indeed still remain a matter of speculation. Anthropologists have held that, in the material sphere, the Negroids may be credited with the invention of the bow (although it may also have been invented independently by other races). The cult of the *ficus* tree, associated over the great part of the world with fertility and with the souls of the dead, obtains very largely in India, and it may have been an inheritance from the Negroids. Further, the legend of the path of the dead to paradise, guarded by an avenging demon, found in Indonesia and contiguous parts, might also have been originally a Negroid belief.[1] Certain totemistic notions connected with fishes, animals, and plants may similarly have originally belonged to the Negroids, and have been handed over to the people who have supplanted them.

THE AUSTRICS

The Austrics of India are represented by the Kol or Munda peoples mainly—the Niṣādas of the Vedic times and the Kolla and Bhilla peoples of 1500 years ago as well as the Śabaras and Pulindas. From these peoples, as we find them at the present day, we may form some idea about the mentality of the Proto-Australoids. The original Proto-Australoids might have arrived in India as food-gatherers, like the Negroids, and might have brought a Palaeolithic culture. But on the soil of India, they seem to have gradually developed a characteristic culture which included primitive agriculture with the digging stick (*jhoom* cultivation found in Assam and in the hill regions of eastern India) and the hoe cultivation (still practised among the Newars of Nepal). The later descendants of the Austrics or the various Kol peoples show certain definite mental traits which still characterize large masses of the Indian people, especially in the north, among whom the

[1] Cf. *Census of India, 1931: Volume I—India* (Report by J. H. Hutton, Delhi, 1933), Part I. p. 443.

Austric element is predominant. In their dealings with other peoples, they are generally passive rather than aggressive, and yet they possess an innate energy and doggedness which could wear down outside aggressiveness. They are apt to receive impressions from outsiders, but they have the capacity of assimilating what they receive. They are credulous rather than questioning, and imaginativeness makes them superstitious, rather than purely poetic. They are gregarious and fond of company in concerted work, festivals, and dances. In social behaviour, among sections they permit licence within certain limits, and they have a tendency towards amativeness, but fidelity in domestic life is also their ideal. A sense of equality pervades their social structure more than among many other groups of Indian people.[2]

It was the malleability of the Austric temper that possibly gave to the more energetic and aggressive Dravidians, Aryans, and the mixed Dravido-Aryans, as well as the Kirātas, their chance.

In the opinion of the anthropologists, on the material side, the boomerang and the blow-gun, two among the most primitive weapons, were of Proto-Australoid origin. Austric imagination combined with totemistic notions is, in all likelihood, the basis of that specially Indian literary *genre*, viz. the beast fable. The basis of the Jātaka stories, and that of the *Pañcatantra* and *Hitopadeśa*, may reasonably be regarded as going back to the Austric world.

Certain philosophical ideas, in their fundamental conception, also appear to be Austric. The kinsmen of the Indian Austrics outside India, particularly in Polynesia, have the idea of *mana*, or the divine essence, which permeates individual objects and beings and the whole universe even. The later Hindu conception of the Brahman pervading the universe, in being both transcendent and immanent, possibly had, as one of its main bases, this idea of *mana*, which can be reasonably expected to have been current among the primitive Austrics of India. There is strange agreement

[2] The following observations by a very sympathetic student of the aboriginals of Chota Nagpur, made about the Oraons (who, although Dravidian-speaking, live in the same cultural *milieu* as the Austric- or Kol-speaking Santals, Mundas, and others), are equally applicable to the Kol-speaking Austrics as well: 'A few notes should be added on Uraon (Oraon) "character". To the earliest observers, a capacity for cheerful hard work was the most notable characteristic of the Uraons; and a sturdy gaiety, an exultation in bodily physique, and a sense of fun are still their most obvious qualities. These are linked to a fundamental simplicity—a tendency to see an emotion as an action, and not to complicate it by postponement or cogitation. An Uraon hardly ever thinks about himself, and for this reason a state of anger is only with difficulty distinguished from an act of assault. In a similar way, Uraons dislike doing nothing, and this perhaps explains both the frequency of their dancing and the round of visiting which occurs in the slack season of the year. Equally, an Uraon dislikes being alone, and he relishes a happy domestic life with a jolly wife, three or four children, and a dog. Markets, marriages, and liquor shops are also very popular, because they bring Uraons together. The final picture is of a kindly simplicity and a smiling energy'—W. G. Archer, *The Blue Grove—The Poetry of the Uraons* (George Allen & Unwin, London, 1940), p. 19.

of the Indian theory of creation[3] with those of Polynesians, Maoris, and others, which describe the evolution of the material world from the unformed primeval basis of darkness and non-existence. We have also to note that the conception of the universe as a gigantic egg (*Brahmāṇḍa*, the mystic egg of the supreme Spirit) as well as the notion of the supreme Spirit incarnating Itself (*avatāra*) in animal bodies (Fish, Tortoise, and Boar), certain mythological and romantic tales such as that of Satyavatī who had a fishy body-odour (*matsyagandhā*), the computation of the days and months by the phases of the moon (*tithis*), all have their analogues among the Polynesian Austrics. It is strange that the Sanskrit words for the full moon (*rākā*) and the new moon (*kuhū*) have corresponding words of similar sound in the Polynesian Austric languages (Maori, *rakau-nuia*; Mangaian, *rakau*; Taihitian, *ra'au-mua*; and Hawaiian, *ia'au* for full moon night, and Marquesan, *ku'u* for the seventeenth night, the first night of the new moon).[4] It is more than plausible that the Austric ideas about the soul of man after death furnished one of the main bases in the conception of *saṁsāra* or transmigration, to which moral and philosophical contents were later added in Hinduism.

THE DRAVIDIANS

The next language-culture group which arrived on the Indian scene was the Dravidian. The Dravidians represented a later, developed form of Mediterranean man in his three types, all of whom are supposed to have spoken forms of primitive Dravidian speech. Draviḍa or Dramiḍa, as we find it in Sanskrit, is only a modification of a national, racial, or tribal name of this people for itself, which was in the Dravidian speech, as current in the Deccan during the first half of the first millennium B.C., in the form Dramiza. Subsequently, from this word we have in Old Tamil 'Tamiz', which is the present 'Tamil'.[5]

The Dravidian-speaking peoples spread from Iran to India. They appear to have been known to the Aryans at first by two names, Dāsa and

[3] Cf. *Ṛg-Veda*, X. 129.

[4] Cf. Panchanan Mitra, 'A Vedic Night of the Moon from Polynesia', *Calcutta Oriental Journal*, July 1934; also Suniti Kumar Chatterji, 'India and Polynesia: Austric Bases of Indian Civilization and Thought' in the *Bhārata-kaumudī*—Studies in Indology in Honour of Dr. Radhakumud Mookerji (Allahabad, 1945), pp. 193-208.

[5] An important Mediterranean people of antiquity, the Cretans, called themselves Termilai (according to Herodotus, fifth century B.C.); and the Lykians of Lycia described themselves as Trmmli in their inscriptions, which belong to the same epoch. The word 'Dramiza' became, round about the time of Christ, 'Damiza', and this was transformed by the Sinhalese into 'Damila' and by the Greeks into 'Damir' (as in Damirikē, to mean the Tamil country). By the middle of first millennium A.D., the Telugus described the Tamilians as Aravalu, which is explained to mean 'the speechless people' (Sanskrit, *a*='not'+*rava*='sound or voice'); but it is more likely that it was just an old Dravidian tribal name; we find a people in South Sind named by the Greeks as Arabitai.

Dasyu (in Iran, these names changed into Daha and Dahyu). The remains of a magnificent city-civilization, as at Harappā or Mohenjo-daro, with an advanced system of writing, are possibly to be ascribed to them. Some of the fundamental practices in Brāhmaṇical Hinduism, as opposed to Vedism, like the worship of Śiva and Umā, Viṣṇu and Śrī, and the ideas and practice of Yoga philosophy as well as mysticism, appear to have been derived from the Dravidian-speaking Mediterranean people settled in India. The Aryans themselves were, in their original state, a semi-nomadic people, relying upon their flocks and herds more than upon agriculture. They had no cities, but only little stockades round the dwelling of their chieftain, where they could take refuge with their flocks and herds in case of war, such stockades being known as *pura* or *purī* (an Aryan word which occurs in Greek as *polis*). But the Dravidians had *nagaras*, and *nagara* has been explained as a Dravidian word suggesting a city with built houses. In organization and in physical vigour, the Aryans were perhaps stronger than the Draviḍas and Niṣādas, but in material culture, and probably also in emotional quality, the Dravidians were superior to the Aryans, particularly in the domain of art and mystic perception. Of art, the Aryans brought to India just a few elements which they derived from the Assyrio-Babylonians, among whom they sojourned on their way to India. The *Ṛg-Veda*, the oldest document in Aryan language, already shows sufficient traces of Dravidian and other non-Aryan influence. The Vedic speech contains a good number of non-Aryan words, and the development of the cerebral sound in the Indo-Aryan may be attributed to the proximity of the Dravidian speech with cerebrals as its characteristic sounds. The Dravidian sense of the mystic found its expression both in their ritual of worship and in their discipline of *yoga* as a path for union with the Divinity, as well as in their desire to keep in constant touch with the dead by means of a ceremonial, on which is based the later Hindu practice of *śrāddha*.

The Aryan attitude to unseen forces behind life was simple and rather primitive. The gods, who were thirty-three in number, occupied certain celestial regions. They were not strictly anthropomorphic: they were but partly humanized, and they retained a good deal of their original aspect as forces of nature. As yet they had no tangible images and symbols. Fire was their messenger. The Aryan man killed an ox, a sheep, a goat, or, at times, a horse, and offered its meat and fat, together with milk and butter, barley-bread (*puroḍāś*), and *soma* drink, through the fire to his gods. The gods were gratified with this offer of food and drink, and in return they gave the worshipper what he wanted, viz. wealth, sons, long life, and victory over enemies. This was the Aryan ritual of *homa* or fire-worship, which we find all over the Indo-European world.

In strong contrast to this was the rite of the *pūjā,* which is now the characteristic Hindu ritual of worship, and the most common one. This was a non-Aryan, and in all likelihood the original Dravidian, ritual. The word '*pūjā*' and the ritual it denotes are both peculiar to India; they are not found among the kinsmen of the Indian Aryans outside India. The nature of the *pūjā* is as follows: The whole universe is filled with the spirit of the Divinity. By a magical rite, the supreme Spirit is invoked into some special object—an image, a picture, a pot, a pebble or piece of stone, a branch of a tree, etc. When this ritual, known as *prāṇa-pratiṣṭhā,* is performed, the image or the object becomes a sort of abode of the Divinity, temporary or permanent. The image or symbol is then treated like an honoured guest. Water, flowers, leaves of certain plants, fruits and grain, and also cooked food are offered to it. It is sought to be regaled with music and dancing and other things of State which pertain to a royal personage. The individual worshipper can also come into a sort of very deep personal spiritual relationship with the Divinity through this symbol. In fact, in the deeper aspect of religion, this Dravidian or non-Aryan ritual of *pūjā* conduces to a more intimate kinship with the Divine than can be postulated through the Aryan *homa.* The *homa* ritual is basically one of 'take and give in return'. In *pūjā,* we have an attendant spirit of abandon through devotion, which is absent in the *homa.* In later Hinduism, these two rituals were combined; and both *pūjā* and *homa* have a place in Brāhmaṇical Hinduism.

In the entire Vedic literature, we have only *homa*; and one of the names for this ritual is *paśu-karma,* i.e. 'the ritual with the animal'. In Dravidian, '*pū*' means 'flower', and the root '*cey*' or '*gey*' means 'to do'; so that, according to one explanation, *pū-cey* or *pū-gey,* meaning *puṣpa-karma,* would appear to be the Dravidian counterpart of the Aryan *paśu-karma.* Another derivation proposed of the word '*pūjā*' is the Dravidian word '*pūsu*', 'to smear'; and this derivation suggests that it was a ritual in which sandal paste or vermilion, representing blood, was smeared upon the symbol; and in some forms of *pūjā* involving animal sacrifice, the victim was beheaded, and its blood was taken in a pot and placed before the image or symbol, which was sometimes smeared with it (in *homa,* the victim was generally strangled, and its meat and fat were burnt on the fire-altar). It seems that Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva, who was later identified with the Divinity as Its incarnation, for the first time gave his support to the *pūjā* ritual. In the *Bhagavad-Gītā* (IX. 26), we find the following verse:

Patraṁ puṣpaṁ phalaṁ toyaṁ yo me bhaktyā prayacchati,
Tad ahaṁ bhaktyupahṛtam aśnāmi prayatātmanaḥ.

'Whoever with devotion offers Me a leaf, a flower, a fruit, or water, that I accept—the devout gift of the pure-minded.'

This verse is of tremendous significance in the history of Hindu religion, as it gave the charter, the official *imprimatur*, so to say, to an un-Vedic, non-Aryan ritual when Hindu society was being given its permanent shape by the mixed Aryan and non-Aryan thought-leaders in the Madhyadeśa, or Upper Gaṅgā valley.

Hindu tradition has since then diverted what were originally racial or national attitudes and methods of worship into two distinct ideological categories, the Vedic and the Paurāṇic-Tāntric, or, in Hindu parlance, the Nigama and the Āgama, which were mutually exclusive as well as complementary. The Nigama represented the pure Vedic tradition—the Vedānta is the *Nigamānta-vidyā*. The Āgama is the spiritual teaching and connected spiritual practices, including *yoga* and the rituals of *pūjā*, which were inculcated by Śiva, and Śiva was originally outside the fold of the Aryan pantheon. To my mind, there has never been, in any system of religion and mythology, a vaster or more profound conception of the ultimate Reality than that which developed in India in the dual forms of Śiva and Umā, on the one hand, and Viṣṇu and Śrī, on the other. And these conceptions were a joint creation of the Aryan and the non-Aryan.[6]

The Dravidians were a civilized city people, at least over a great part of India. The Sanskrit word '*nagara*' (town) has been explained as being of Dravidian origin. But they have very intimately commingled with the Aryans, particularly in the North. However, taking note of certain very deep differences between the mentality and atmosphere of the Vedic world and those of the classical Hindu world, particularly in the lands of the Dravidian speech, we may say that the Dravidian mind was more introspective and, at the same time, more mystical than the Aryan, which was more matter-of-fact and more practical. The Dravidian mind was also much more speculative and prone to niceties of discussion. A certain amount of

[6] It has been suggested that Śiva was originally a mystic divinity who was red in colour with blue throat, the blue in the throat representing the world poison which Śiva drank to save the universe. He was *nīla-lohita* or 'the blue and red one'. 'Śiva' is a Sanskrit word meaning 'the auspicious One', but it is also a Dravidian word meaning 'the red One'. As 'the red One', the Indo-Aryan equivalent of the Dravidian Śivan (Śeyon) would be Rudra (compare *rudhira, rohita, lohita* from *rodhita*=red or blood), and this word could easily merge into the Aryan Rudra or 'the Roarer', who was a separate divinity with some points of contact with the Dravidian Śivan. Umā, in spite of a different scholastic explanation of the name given by Kālidāsa in the *Kumāra-sambhava*, is nothing but a modification of Mā, 'the great Mother'. Śrī, unquestionably Aryan, is the goddess of harvest and of plenty and beauty—the name we find in Sanskrit forms '*śreyas*' and '*śreṣṭha*', meaning 'better' and 'best'—and it has its counterpart in the name of the Roman divinity Ceres. Viṣṇu represents not only the Aryan conception of a Sun-god who fills up the universe with his rays, but also the Dravidian conception of a Sky-god, blue in colour, because the sky is blue (Dravidian, *viṇ*=sky). In this way, it would appear that the conceptions which are most characteristically Hindu are very largely derived from the non-Aryan world.

devotional abandon characterizes the Dravidian mind more than the Aryan: in early Aryan literature, we have nothing which can compare with the passionate devotion to Śiva and Viṣṇu, which we find, for example, in the hymns of the Śaiva Nāyanmārs and the Vaiṣṇava Āzhvārs (Āḷvārs), saints who flourished during the second half of the first millennium A.D. In the matter of social attitude and usage, we cannot definitely assert that caste as a system was the creation of the Dravidians. There were classes among the Aryans and the Dravidians; but the rigidity of castes, which had its basis in various factors (original racial differences, accompanied by a desire to keep a particular stock pure; diversity of occupation, social rank, education, culture; etc.), was a thing which developed gradually among all sections of Hindu community throughout India. It was the result of a specific theory of society which was engendered by a desire to push to their logical end certain conclusions drawn from the actual diversity of men in quality and status, all set against a background of the philosophical notions of *karma* and *saṁsāra*. In practical life, caste became rigid, and almost inflexible, after the conquest of North India by the Turks. A situation was then arrived at when the maintenance of caste meant the continuance of a particular group in the Hindu tradition. The Dravidian-speaking peoples were largely matriarchal, whereas the Aryans were patriarchal. In this matter the Aryan attitude has won, matriarchy surviving in isolated parts of India like Kerala. Art occupied a greater part of the religious and social life of the Dravidians than in the case of the Aryans. In fact, the Brāhmaṇic discipline on its Vedic side had very little of art in it.

THE ARYANS

The Aryans came to India after 1500 B.C. by way of eastern Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, and then Iran, where a distinct Indo-Aryan form of the original Indo-European culture had developed, in the evolution of which we have to admit a number of Asianic (i.e. Asia Minor) and Mesopotamian elements, in religion and mythology as well as in the outer paraphernalia of civilization. In spite of this contact with the highly civilized peoples of West Asia, with whom they sojourned for centuries, the Aryans entered India retaining a good deal of their primitive character as a semi-nomadic people whose main wealth was their herds and flocks, and it is in India that they found their fullest expression as a result of their contact with the Dravidians, the Niṣādas, and the Kirātas. What they lacked in material civilization, they more than compensated for by their native vigour and *rudesse*, and with their adaptability and imagination built up a synthetic Hindu culture out of the different cultural elements in India. It would be interesting to institute a research into the native Aryan mentality by

closely studying the Vedas, the Avesta, and the Old Persian inscriptions, and yet the conclusions cannot be absolutely warrantable in all cases. But certain things stand out in a conspicuous manner.

The Aryan attitude towards women was something of a very sane and wholesome character. The Aryan society was a monogamous one, and the legally married wife was her husband's helpmate (*sahadharmiṇī*), friend, and comrade. A man could not undertake any serious social or religious duty without his wife. In India, altered circumstances of social environment brought about a change in the Aryan attitude. For, when perhaps the wife came from non-Aryan groups, those religious and social rights which belonged to the Aryan wife, such as the ceremony of *upanayana* or initiation into Vedic lore which was performed for boys as well as for girls, were gradually dropped ; and for a woman, as much as for a Śūdra, the sacred and mystic syllable *Om* became taboo. On the whole, in spite of polygamy sometimes getting the upper hand among the rich people, the Aryan monogamous ideal has been most commonly followed in the Hindu society.

One might say the Aryan laid greater stress on the intellect, and the non-Aryans (Drāviḍa, Niṣāda, and Kirāta) on the emotions. The sacred *Gāyatrī* verse, the highest prayer inculcated by the Aryan and regarded as the holiest prayer of Brāhmaṇism, asks God to direct our intellect (*dhiyo yo naḥ pracodayāt*). Reason and emotion, however, are both given equality of status in the achievement of man's spiritual realization ; *jñāna* and *bhakti* are the two pivots in man's spiritual life. To that Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva added *karma,* disinterested action performed in the spirit of duty and as a form of worship. According to individual tastes and predilections, sages and saints and devotees have laid greater or lesser stress on *jñāna* and *bhakti,* and men of action have sought to realize truth through *karma.* But the ideal which is aimed at by the general mass of Hindus, under Brāhmaṇa inspiration, is that of a harmonious combination of the two—*jñānamiśrā bhakti.* In this, more than in anything else, we see the harmonization of diverse racial and cultural attitudes or ideals.

Another trait which developed as a historical process in the culture of India is the idea of *ahiṁsā* or non-injury to every living creature. This was given the greatest value by the Buddhist and Jaina forms of Indianism ; and in principle it has been also accepted by Brāhmaṇism. The early Aryans had, however, no special notion of the sanctity of life, and their religious ritual included the slaughter of animals. The Kirātas and Niṣādas were equally cruel and callous in their sacrificial rites. It was indeed a great triumph of humanity when the religious validity of animal sacrifice was questioned and its practice discountenanced. Already we find in the *Mahābhārata* (*Anuśāsanaparvan*) a critical attitude towards meat-eating and

consequently to offering of animal sacrifices in religious ritual. Denunciation of Vedic and other forms of animal sacrifice went hand in hand with the establishment of the principle of *ahiṁsā*. Yet, this cruelty was tolerated through a reverence for the antiquity and for the magical quality of the rites (*vaidikī hiṁsā, hiṁsā na bhavati, tasmin yajñe vadho'vadhaḥ*). The principle of *ahiṁsā*, however, developed in India, as there was an abundance of grain, milk, and butter, which rendered the consumption of flesh meat unnecessary, particularly in the hot climate of the plains of India. It is not easy to point out the special contribution of any of the components of the Indian population in the evolution of the negative doctrine of *ahiṁsā* or non-injury and the positive doctrine of *karuṇā* or intellectual charity for all and *maitrī* or active good-doing.

On the individual plane, we find that the most reasonable scheme was evolved in the shape of the four *āśramas* or stages in the life of a man. The Aryan was free from that abnormal spirit of religious dedication which instituted the practice of enforced celibacy. The average man was to spend the first quarter of the ideally expected hundred years of human life in study and preparation (*brahmacarya*), the next quarter in living the life of a householder (*gārhasthya*), and the third quarter in the life of retirement (*vānaprasthya*), to be followed by the final period of complete detachment from the affairs of the world and meditation on the Supreme (*sannyāsa*). Of course, if one felt the consuming fire of high spirituality within, he was at liberty to lead the life of a celibate devotee, cut off from the affairs of the world and dedicating himself to the spiritual life. Unconventional sexual life has been sought to be regulated for the elevation of the spiritual in man by the *vāmācāra* form of Tāntricism, and this too has a certain racial (mostly Kirāta) basis. But this is not indicative of the common *milieu* of Hinduism.

THE MONGOLOIDS

We may now consider the fifth basic element which helped in the formation of Hindu mentality and culture. This is the Kirāta or Mongoloid or rather Indo-Mongoloid element in the Indian population. An appraisement of the rôle of the Mongoloid peoples in the development of the composite Hindu or Indian culture should be looked upon as an important line of inquiry in tracing the history of Indian civilization. The part played by the Mongoloid peoples was confined largely to the north-eastern frontiers of India, to central and eastern Nepal, North Bihar, North and East Bengal, and Assam. These are rather far removed from the hub of Indian civilization and history, i.e. the Upper Gaṅgā valley, the Punjab, western India, the Deccan, and the Tamil land. The Mongoloid element, because of its late

arrival (the Mongoloids were probably later even than the Aryans), could not penetrate far into the interior to leaven the whole of India, as the Austrics, the Dravidians, and the Aryans did. No personality of proved Mongoloid origin, as far as we know, could achieve anything of pan-Indian importance, although a few things of pan-Indian significance were performed or contemplated by the members of this race. Moreover, their greatest periods of achievement were late, when the Turks and the Afghans, the Rajputs and the North Indian Mussalmans, the Marathas and the Kannadigas, the Telugus and the Tamilians were engaged in a drama of war and peace. And in the work of a pan-Indian cultural assimilation, the Newar and the Kiranti of Nepal, the Bodo of northern and eastern Bengal and Assam, the Ahom of Assam, the Kuki-Chin, and other Mongoloid peoples did not play a prominent part. Their early history still remains obscure, and they do not appear to have been in possession of a high grade of culture. Although they influenced Hindu religion in the north-east, their participation was mostly of the nature of assimilation and absorption of the Hindu civilization of mixed Austric, Dravidian, and Aryan origin.

The Mongoloids appear to have been already established in the southern Himalayan slopes and in eastern India by about 1000 B.C., for there is mention of the Kirāta people in the *Yajur-Veda* and the *Atharva-Veda*. They represent two or three different peoples racially, all speaking forms of Sino-Tibetan and belonging to the same culture type which originally developed somewhere in eastern China, either in the area to the east of the Hwang-ho valley or near about the head-waters of the Yang-tsze-kiang. They came into India in various groups, and fall under the following heads: (1) Tibeto-Burman Mongoloids represented by (*a*) the Tibetans proper (Ladakhis, Lahouls, and Spiti Tibetans, Sikkimese, and Bhutanese), all of whom are very late comers into India ; (*b*) the Himalayan Tibeto-Burmans, who appear to be a very early group to come into India, and are represented by the Newars and other original inhabitants of Nepal, including tribes like the Magars and the Gurungs who are becoming Hinduized as Gurkhas (using the term loosely), and other peoples like the Kirantis, the Lepchas, the Dhimals, the Kanowaris, etc. ; (*c*) the North-Assam group, consisting of the Aka, Miri, Abor, Mishmi, and Dafla tribes ; (*d*) the Bodo-Naga group, represented by the Bodo tribes, such as the Garo, Kachari, Koch, Mech, Rabha, Tipra, etc., and various small Naga tribes speaking different dialects ; (*e*) Burmese-Kuki-Chin-Kachin-Lolo group, represented by the Burmese proper, the Kuki-Chin tribes (including the Kukis, the Meitheis or Manipuris, and the Lusheis), and the Kachin or the Singpo people, as well as the Lolo tribes, the last two living outside India along with the Burmese ; and (*f*) the Mikirs of Assam, who form a sort of half-way house

between Nagas and Kuki-Chins. (2) The Siamese-Chinese group represented by the Shans, a branch of which are the Ahoms who arrived in India in A.D. 1228, conquered eastern Assam, and gradually became masters of the Brahmaputra valley.

There is plenty of evidence to show that the Sanskrit-using Hindus from very early times were conscious of the Kirāta people, living in the hilly regions of the east, as being a yellow race akin to the Chinese. Very early contact between the two is quite likely. One of the heroes of the Kurukṣetra battle was Bhagadatta, the king of Assam, who has been repeatedly described as the ruler of the Mlecchas, whose army consisted of Kirātas and Cīnas. In Nepal, at the present day, we find a large population which is Mongoloid in origin, but Aryan in religion and culture. The same thing might have very well been the case in Nepal and the Tarai region 2500 years ago. Certain scholars have held that the Licchavis, and even the Kauliya tribe of which the Buddha was a member, were all Tibeto-Burman in origin, pure or mixed, in spite of their Aryan language and their claiming to be Kṣatriyas. The history of the Indo-Mongoloids, as has been suggested before, has been mainly their absorption within the Hindu fold, large masses of them ultimately becoming Aryan-speaking Hindus in northern Bihar, northern and eastern Bengal, and Assam. This was going on in Assam silently, but quite effectively, during the entire millennium after Christ. In Nepal, the original Nepalese became similarly Indianized in culture with Tāntric Buddhism from Bengal and Bihar as their religion; but whereas the Bodo people of Bengal and Assam slowly abandoned their language and took up the Aryan speech, the Newars of Nepal adopted the Indian script, but cultivated their own language. This Newari speech, as vehicle of Buddhist literature, is once more having a revival at the present day.

A strong Hindu nationalism filled most of the Mongoloid people from the fifteenth century. The Bodos of North Bengal, as represented by the Koch tribe, formed a great empire under Bisu or Viśvanātha Siṁha and his son Naranārāyaṇa Siṁha, whose brother Śukladhvaja, known as Cilārāy, was a great general. They came into conflict with the Ahom kings of Assam, and with the Moguls from Delhi and Agra.

During the reign of Naranārāyaṇa, the Koch people were largely Hinduized with the help of Brāhmaṇa scholars from South Bengal. In the seventeenth century, the Ahoms became paramount in Assam, and there was a great advance in Hinduization under Gadādhara Siṁha (Su-pat-pha, who died in 1691) and his puissant son Rudra Siṁha (Su-khrung-pha) who ruled from 1691 to 1714. Rudra Siṁha, after conquering the independent Indo-Mongoloid kings of southern Assam, the Kachari and Jayantia kings,

was actively engaged in fostering a confederacy of Hindu princes in eastern India to help him in fighting the Moguls and freeing Assam, Bengal, and eastern India from Muslim rule. Another important Kirāta house in eastern India was that of Tripura, which also came into prominence in the fifteenth century, and carried on for centuries the struggle with the Muslim rulers of Bengal. Another champion of Indian culture was the ruling house of Manipur. Like the Tripura or Tipperah ruling house, the Manipuris claim to be Kṣatriyas, and it is quite likely that the Brāhmaṇical influences penetrated this area very early, as Burmese tradition mentions a continuous stream of Kṣatriya migration from North India into Burma through Assam and Manipur. By A.D. 1500, Vaiṣṇavism had established itself in Manipur, and by 1750, Vaiṣṇava preachers of the Caitanya school from Sylhet effected a link between Manipur and Bengal by converting the ruling house to the Caitanya Vaiṣṇavism of Navadvīpa. Manipuri, written in Bengali letters, has become the literary language of some five lakhs of people in the Manipur State, and is spreading there as a vehicle of Hindu culture among the Nagas, the Kukis, and other tribes.

It will be difficult to label the characteristics of the Indo-Mongoloid people as a whole in certain categorical terms, but it may be said that a great optimism and a cheerfulness of temper, combined with *bonhomie* and *camaraderie*, born of a sense of liberty and love of freedom, appear to be the most salient qualities of the Mongoloid peoples. Self-reliance and courage as well as resourcefulness are other good points in the Mongoloid character. On the debit side, however, they appear to be rather credulous, and at times they can be very cruel to both men and beasts; and, besides, they lack a depth of thought and possibly also a depth of feeling. They are factual and not philosophic; pragmatic and practical and not argumentative; and they have an innate sense of decoration, rhythm, and colour. In certain matters, particularly in art, they make very good pupils, but they seldom go beyond the traditional path.

The Mongoloid peoples were great transmitters of culture, which they received from the Hindus of the plains. The Newars passed on the art of the Pāla dynasty to Tibet and beyond; and the Bodos of East Bengal, in the Paṭṭikera kingdom of Comilla and in certain Hindu or Hinduized kingdoms of Chittagong and Arakan, appear to have been the intermediaries in the transmission, by land routes, of Brāhmaṇical and Buddhist culture into Burma and beyond, from about A.D. 1000 to 1500.

It was some centuries after the birth of Christ that this *rapprochement* between the pre-Hindu religious cults and customs and the pure Hindu Śākta faith and philosophy began to take place, and the final shape was given by the kings of Cooch-Behar and Tipperah. King Naranārāyaṇa organized

Hinduism in relation to the earlier Bodo and other Tibeto-Burman cults of the land after building the great temple of Kāmākhyā in A.D. 1564, so that a work like the *Yoginī Tantra*, probably composed in the sixteenth century, could say that the religion in the Assam area was of Kirāta origin.[7] In Nepal, Newari Buddhism similarly presents a strange mixture of Buddhist notions with a sanguinary Tāntric ritual. The Tāntric form of later Hinduism, which, however, is not divorced from its bases in *yoga* and Paurāṇic faith and ritual, seems to have taken its final colouring from the character of the Mongoloid cults, which it replaced. Among the Mongoloid tribes, women had far greater freedom in marriage, divorce, and other matters than we find in orthodox Hindu society. Certain aspects of *vāmācāra* Tāntricism have their bases evidently in this side of Indo-Mongoloid life and ways. In fact, the worship of the Great Mother in some of Her various shrines of Assam and East Bengal, particularly in Kāmākhyā near Gauhati, is looked upon as being originally Kirāta or Tibeto-Burman.

Hindu culture, particularly in the sphere of religion, is a variegated fabric of many-coloured threads, and the harmony of the diverse colours is capable of analysis and consideration separately. Attempts have been made to do this from various aspects; only the racial bases or implications were not understood or appreciated until recently. We are not always sure of our methodology, and consequently it is natural that conclusions will be drawn which at times appear fantastic. The synthesis was arrived at over a period spread out into centuries, or even a couple of millennia, without much clear indication as to the processes which were operative in the dim darkness of prehistory and semi-history, independent of political events and dates, but faintly remembered by national memory. We have tried here to analyse this synthesis in its broad outlines. Mother India is the repository of a composite culture, of which the vehicle of expression is the Aryan language, but the contributions brought by the Niṣādas, the Kirātas, and the Draviḍas are as important as those of the Aryans. This composite culture is the ocean in which several rivers have mingled their waters.

[7] *Siddheśi! yoginī-pīṭhe dharmaḥ kairātajo mataḥ.*

PART II

PREHISTORIC INDIA

6

THE STONE AGE IN INDIA

I

IN May 1863, R. Bruce Foote of the Geological Survey of India made a momentous discovery by unearthing a Palaeolithic tool from a laterite pit at Pallavaram near Madras. Working between 1863 and 1904, he located as many as 459 prehistoric sites* in peninsular India. Among these, 42 belonged to the Old Stone Age and 252 to the New. In 1864, C. Oldham similarly found a number of Palaeolithic tools in the Cuddapah District, while V. Ball recovered some stone implements in the same year in various portions of Bengal and Orissa. As most of these objects were surface finds, their geological age remained uncertain. And it was only when A. B. Wynne discovered an agate knife flake near Paithan on the upper Godāvarī in 1865, and C. Hackett found a quartzite hand-axe at Bhutra on the Narmadā in 1873, that a new light was thrown upon the age of early man in India, for both of the last two examples of human workmanship were associated with fossil mammals belonging to the Pleistocene period.

For many years after Foote's discovery, the work of exploration was continued by numerous workers, some of whom were geologists by profession; a few, administrative officers; and still others, amateurs who happened to be interested in the subject. The bulk of the collection of these explorers, made between 1864 and 1902, has been preserved in the Indian Museum in Calcutta,[1] while the main body of Foote's collection has been preserved in the Government Museum in Madras.[2] The interested reader may also refer to H. C. Das Gupta's *Bibliography of Prehistoric Indian Antiquities* for details.[3]

The first book on Indian prehistory, *Old Chipped Stones of India,* was published in 1906 by A. C. Logan. The second work on the subject appeared in 1923 (revised and enlarged in 1927), when P. Mitra's *Prehistoric India* was published by the University of Calcutta. In 1924 and 1927, L. A. Cammiade published two interesting articles entitled 'Pygmy Implements of the Lower Godāvarī' and 'Prehistoric Man in India and the Karnul (Kurnool) Bone Caves'.[4] The importance of the Kurnool caves had already

* For some important prehistoric sites see map on p. 109.

[1] Coggin Brown, *Catalogue of Prehistoric Antiquities in the Indian Museum at Calcutta* (1917).

[2] R. Bruce Foote, *Catalogue of the Prehistoric Antiquities in the Collection of the Government Museum, Madras* (1901).

[3] Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, 1931.

[4] *Man in India* (Ranchi), IV, VI.

been recognized in 1864, when Foote found bone tools in association with Pleistocene mammalian fossils on the cave floor.

Between 1930 and 1932, two important articles published on the subject of Indian prehistory laid the foundation of a systematic study of prehistory in India. They were entitled 'Fresh Light on the Stone Ages in S.-E. India' by M. C. Burkitt and L. A. Cammiade[5] and 'Climatic Changes in South-East India during Early Palaeolithic Times'[6] by M. C. Burkitt, L. A. Cammiade, and F. J. Richards. Burkitt classified the Kurnool implements, on the basis of typology and stratigraphy, into four groups. The first and earliest consisted mainly of hand-axes and cleavers, the second of a variety of flake tools, the third of blades and burins, while the fourth contained microlithic tools.

RECENT RESEARCHES (1932-56)

In 1932, an interesting implement-bearing section was discovered by K. R. U. Todd at Kandivli on the west coast of Bombay, described in two articles: 'Prehistoric Man Round Bombay'[7] and 'Palaeolithic Industries of Bombay'.[8] Todd's section starts with a lower clay and a lower gravel bed. This is followed by a layer of middle clay, which is succeeded by an upper gravel and upper clay bed. The lower clay yielded a series of crude cores, mainly choppers and scrapers, some of which are also on flakes. Tools resembling Abbevillian and Clactonian forms were recovered from the lower gravel, which is lateritized. A few Acheulian hand-axes and cleavers have also been found in this bed, while some flake tools have come from near its top. The top of the middle clay yielded a blade industry in association with small hand-axes on flakes.

The upper clay is characterized by a blade industry, recalling the Aurignacian of Europe. Finally, in the coastal areas, a microlithic industry was recovered from the surface of the ground. Todd thus succeeded in establishing a well-marked evolutionary series occurring in stratigraphic succession. The foundation of scientific investigation was thus laid in the science of prehistory in India.

In 1935, an expedition under the auspices of the universities of Yale and Cambridge, led by H. de Terra, while T. T. Paterson, T. de Chardin, two Indian students from Calcutta and Madras, and an officer of the Geological Survey of India made up the rest of the party, carried out systematic investigation on the subject of Ice Age and associated human

[5] *Antiquity*, IV, 1930.
[6] *Geological Magazine* (London), LXIX, 1932.
[7] *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society of East Anglia*, 1932.
[8] *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* (London), LXIX, 1939.

cultures in Kashmir and Jammu territories, north-western Punjab, Sind, the Narmadā valley, and Madras.[*]

The climatic changes, the sequence of cold and warm epochs, which left their mark in the Himalayan valleys, also had their effect on rivers which flow through the plains in the South. The authors observed in the valley of the Soan near Rawalpindi evidence of the fact that the river had become intermittently fast and slow, i.e. periods of erosion and deposition had succeeded one another. This fluctuation had brought about a series of broad terraces on both of its banks. The terraces were designated T_1 (at 450 ft.), T_2 (at 380 ft.), T_3 (at 150 ft.), and T_4 (at 90 ft.) above the present level of the river-bed. They have yielded numerous stone tools; and we can study their evolution as well as the climate which prevailed at the time when man lived in this region. Even in the absence of associated fossils, the succession of climates helps us to date prehistoric industries with some amount of precision.

So far as dates are concerned, the boulder-conglomerate bed was supposed to have been deposited at a time when the Himalayas were passing through the Second Glacial phase. These four consecutive terraces were considered to be equivalent to the Second Interglacial, Third Glacial, Third Interglacial, and the Fourth Glacial phases, respectively, of the northern mountain zone.

The earliest tools were large crude flakes, and they occur in the bed of boulders laid down by the Soan river. These and T_1 both belong to Middle Pleistocene times. T_1 has, however, yielded a more evolved industry in its hand-axes of Abbevillian-Acheulian type. A terrace of equivalent age on the Indus has yielded, in contrast, a series of pebble and flake tools. T_2 of the Third Glacial Age contains a rich assemblage of facetted flake tools and cores of Levalloisian type, along with some simple flakes and cores and a few fine pebble tools. The abundance of the flake and pebble tools during the Third Glacial times, and their wide-spread occurrence, have led the authors to designate these as the typical Soan industry. The Potwar silt belonging to T_3 contained worn out tools derived from earlier formations as well as an assemblage of some fresh tools similar to those occurring in the Third Glacial phase. In addition, there were a few blades and elongated flakes recalling Late Levalloisian types of Europe. In the succeeding Fourth Glacial phase, i.e. in T_4, there was a redeposition of loessic loam and sand. Tools of a Late Palaeolithic type were present here.

[*] H. de Terra and T. T. Paterson, *Studies on the Ice Age in India and Associated Human Cultures* (Carnegie Institute of Washington, 1939).

Paterson classified the Soan tools[10] into Early Soan and Late Soan facies. The Early Soan comprises of pebble choppers and scrapers and a small number of flake tools. On the basis of superficial chemical changes in the tools, the Early Soan has again been subdivided into A, B, and C. The Early Soan is followed by the Late Soan, which is considered to be the real Soan industry. There are two subdivisions of the Late Soan, viz. A and B. The Early Soan is held to belong to the Second Interglacial phase, which was roughly between 400,000 and 200,000 years ago. The Late Soan began in the Third Glacial and continued up to the Third Interglacial phase.

The following table shows the correlation between glacial epochs, terrace formations, and culture sequences as reconstructed by De Terra and Paterson.

Pleistocene Subdivisions	Glacial Cycle	Terrace Sequence	Culture Sequence
Upper Pleistocene	Fourth Glacial	T_4 Loamy, silty gravel	Late Palaeolithic industries
	Third Interglacial	T_3 Redeposited Potwar silt	Evolved Soan industry
	Third Glacial	T_2 Potwar loessic silt	Late Soan industry—B Late Soan industry—A
Middle Pleistocene	Second Interglacial	T_1 Upper terrace gravels	Early Soan pebble and flake tools. Abbevillian-Acheulian hand axes
	Second Glacial	T_0 Boulder conglomerate	U S Pre-Soan crude flake p i tools p w
Lower Pleistocene	First Interglacial First Glacial	Pinjor stage Tatrot stage	

The Palaeolithic industries described above are characterized by the following features: (1) The presence of a large number of pebble tools comprising choppers, scrapers, etc. which can be classified into a progressive evolutionary series on the basis of their workmanship; (2) the presence of a large variety of flake tools which are crude and resemble the Clactonian types in the Early Soan stage, gradually becoming finer, with facetted platforms, recalling Levalloisian types in the Late Soan stage; (3) the recurrent association of pebble and flake industries; (4) the occurrence of blade tools in the Late Pleistocene, which is reminiscent of the Upper Palaeolithic in

[10] The Soan tools are mostly preserved at Cambridge and Yale. A part is also in the Indian Museum in Calcutta and the Government Museum in Madras. A separate collection made in 1936-37 by D. Sen is in the Anthropology Department of the Calcutta University.

Europe ; and (5) the presence of an Abbevillian-Acheulian complex. But, by far the largest number and greatest variety of Soan tools are formed by pebbles and flakes. This gives the Soan industry a character which is distinct from the Palaeolithic industries of peninsular India.

The Narmadā valley between Jabalpur (Jubbalpore) and Hoshangabad is rich in Pleistocene deposits, which contain both mammalian remains as well as human artifacts. According to the Yale-Cambridge expedition, the Pleistocene deposits here embrace four sedimentary phases: the oldest is formed by (1) *lateritic* gravels, overlain by (2) the *lower Narmadā* group, which, in turn, is overlain by (3) the *upper Narmadā* group, and finally by (4) the *cotton soil* or *regur*. The lateritic gravels have not so far yielded any tools. But the basal-conglomerate of the lower Narmadā group has yielded stone tools in association with bones of fossil mammals belonging to *Elephas, Bos,* and other genera. These tools are either on large flakes or are rolled hand-axes of Abbevillian-Acheulian types. The upper Narmadā group of deposits is also rich in fossil mammalian remains and in numerous cores and flakes which, in the opinion of De Terra, 'fall well within the typological range of the Late Soan industry of north-western India'.[11] The cotton soil has yielded, in its lowermost deposit of gravels and sands, a rich assemblage of flake and blade tools. It is significant that both lower and upper Narmadā sediments have an abundance of fossils, which have been relegated by geologists to Middle Pleistocene times. De Terra evidently placed more reliance upon typological, than on geological, evidence, for he wrote, 'it is very improbable that these industries appeared in both regions at such different intervals'.[12] De Terra's correlation is therefore not well founded, and the question can only be settled by means of intensive field work and detailed comparison of the techniques of Narmadā and Soan tools, and also between fossils or the climatic conditions under which the animals or plants lived.

WORK OF LATER TEAMS

The tool-bearing laterite in the Palar plains round Madras, on which Paterson and Krishnaswami worked, has been equated by them, on the basis of typology, with the Middle Pleistocene of Narmadā and the Punjab.[13] A fourfold terrace sequence has also been reconstructed for the Madras region. In their opinion, the detrital laterite after deposition was dissected intermittently to produce three terraces. In the absence of detailed, large-

[11] H. de Terra and T. T. Paterson, *op. cit.*, p. 319.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 320.

[13] V. D. Krishnaswami, *Ancient India* (Bulletin of the Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi), No. 3, 1947.

scale contour surveys, the reconstruction leaves much to be desired, although it should be considered to be very suggestive.

The lithic industry starts with hand-axes and cores of Abbevillian type derived from a boulder-conglomerate which was formed before the laterite. The laterite itself has yielded some tools of Acheulian type. But it is not certain whether they come from the first terrace or elsewhere. Rich sites were also discovered near Attirampakkam,[14] where a similar series of terraces was reconstructed. It is said that the basal gravels of the second terrace yielded a considerable number of Acheulian hand-axes and cleavers, along with a series of cores and flakes. This industry has been designated the Madras Industry. Such an industrial designation is, of course, perfectly satisfactory, but the effort to equate it on typological grounds with industries in the Narmadā or Soan valley does not seem to be justified in the present state of our knowledge.

Even within the Andhra and Madras States, there are known caves, as at Kurnool or Alicoor, where tools occur in association with mammalian fossils. It is only to be hoped that intensive excavations will be carried on in these cave-floors and a thorough examination made to find if particular types of tools or tool-associations have a limited distribution in the scale of geological time. If such results are happily attained, the time will then come to treat a specific tool or a specific industry as an index-fossil, whereby beds of unknown age may also be placed in their proper chronological position.

A series of tools (now in the Madras Museum) collected by F. P. Manley from Nellore District was described by A. Aiyappan and Manley in a memoir entitled *The Manley Collection of Stone Age Tools with Topographical and Other Notes*.[15] The sites have been described in detail ; the geological interpretation of the formations is, however, lacking. Aiyappan considers a small series of pebble tools to be the earliest in age. Hand-axes on cores come next, this being followed by cleavers and then by thin hand-axes on flakes. Some scrapers, blades, diminutive hand-axes, awls, and burins are also present in the collection, but their age or stratigraphic position remains uncertain.

WORK IN THE BURHABALANG VALLEY

In 1940, the Anthropology Department of the Calcutta University investigated one of the richest of Palaeolithic fields on the eastern coast of India, namely, in Mayurbhanj. There the valley of the Burhabalang river and its tributaries yielded a large collection of tools, a fairly big number

[14] The main collection is in Cambridge, England.
[15] *Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India* (Delhi), No. 68, 1942.

having been dug up *in situ* from detrital laterites.[16] The artifacts include a great variety of choppers, hand-axes, cleavers, and scrapers, resembling Abbevillian-Acheulian types, which are derived from different layers of detrital laterite, extending from Baripada town to Bangriposi village, a linear distance of about twenty miles.

In one area, a section in the river bank has yielded, towards the bottom, in the boulder-conglomerate, a number of crude, rolled pebble tools, core tools, and some large flakes. The crude hand-axes have some similarity with those derived from the boulder-conglomerate at Vadamadurai near Madras; but the exact geological position of the Mayurbhanj industry is yet uncertain. So far, no associated fossils have been recovered, one of the possible reasons being that the process which causes lateritization is destructive of bone remains. The present authors are now investigating microscopic plant remains embedded in the beds at different levels of the section to find out if these plants indicate any change in climatic conditions. If such proof is forthcoming, then this might be equated with climatic cycles established by workers in other parts of the world, and a means will thus be found for correlating satisfactorily the Stone Age cultures found here with those in other parts of the world.

As hinted previously, the tools here pass through a phase when suitable pebbles gathered from the river-bed were crudely trimmed to fashion useful implements. This was followed in the upper strata by choppers and hand-axes of bold and heavy design. In the detrital deposits of one of the minor tributaries of the Burhabalang, this heavy type was followed by hand-axes and cleavers of finer workmanship. Some flakes were also found in the assemblage, but the flakes were dominant at no stage.

SURVEYS IN OTHER REGIONS

In 1941-42, the Archaeological Survey of India sent a party of workers to the Sābarmatī valley in Gujarat, where hand-axes and pebble-choppers were recovered from lateritized gravel beds, and Krishnaswami expressed the opinion that Gujarat was the meeting place of the Soan and Madras types of industry. Sankalia partly confirmed this view when he said that ancient man in Gujarat was in contact with his confreres in the South.

As a result of a series of explorations under the auspices of the Deccan College Postgraduate and Research Institute, some rich microlithic factory sites have been located in Gujarat, while the remains of 'microlithic man' have also been unearthed in association with human and animal remains.[17]

[16] A report on the subject was published by the present writers in *Excavations in Mayurbhanj* (University of Calcutta, 1948).

[17] H. D. Sankalia and I. Karve, 'Early Primitive Microlithic Culture and People of Gujarat', *American Anthropologist*, LI. No. 1, 1949.

In a recent communication by Sankalia,[18] it has been stated that the rivers of North Gujarat indicate that the Abbevillian-Acheulian industry of Sābarmatī probably belongs to the first wet phase in Middle Pleistocene times, the microlithic industry belonging to the wet phase preceding the present dry phase.

Another expedition in April 1949, in the south of Mirzapur District, under the auspices of the Archaeological Survey of India, has yielded a rich assemblage of Palaeolithic tools. These were from a fluviatile gravel deposit resting on ancient Talcher conglomerates in the Singrauli basin. According to Krishnaswami and Soundara Rajan, the industry is one of bifaces on cores with an associated group of pebble tools.[19] The principal tools include pebble-choppers, hand-axes, cleavers, and discoid scrapers. Flake tools of Proto-Levalloisian type as well as end-scrapers are present. Singrauli is described by Krishnaswami as a region revealing contact of the Soan and Madras lithic traditions, though the dominating element is Madras Abbevillian-Acheulian.

During the last six years (1951-56), Palaeolithic exploration and research have shown notable progress. In Gujarat, in the valleys of Mahī[20] and Sābarmatī, mixed industries of pebble tools, bifaces, and flakes have been found in the gravel and silt. Zeuner[21] describes the Sābarmatī industry as a combination of Late Soan and Middle to Late Acheulian elements dated within the Pleistocene. His dating, based on typological similarities, is, however, tentative. In Nimar District, in Madhya Pradesh, Sankalia has recovered, from two gravel horizons, hand-axes, cleavers, scrapers, and flakes described as Clacto-Abbevillian-Acheulian. Sankalia[22] has also found near Nasik, on the Godāvarī, a flake industry mostly recalling not only the Clactonian technique, but also a Levalloisian technique.

Twenty new sites have been discovered in Karṇāṭaka in the Malaprabhā valley.[23] Joshi describes the Malaprabhā Palaeolithic industry as a biface (Acheulian) industry on core and flake, the latter being more predominant. Deshpande and Rao have discovered in Chittorgarh, in South Rajasthan, a number of Palaeolithic sites yielding mixed industries of biface, cleaver,

[18] *Proceedings of the Indian Science Congress*, Part III, 1950.

[19] 'The Lithic Tool Industries of Singrauli Basin, District Mirzāpur', *Ancient India*, No. 7, 1951.

[20] B. Subbarao, 'Archaeological Exploration in the Mahī Valley', *Journal of the M.S. University of Baroda*, 1952.

[21] F. E. Zeuner, *Stone Age and Pleistocene Chronology in Gujarat* (Deccan College Monograph Series, No. 6, 1950).

[22] *The Godāvarī Palaeolithic Industry* (Deccan College Monograph Series, No. 10, 1952).

[23] Sankalia, Rao, and Joshi, 'Studies in the Prehistory of Karnataka', *Bulletin of the Deccan College Postgraduate and Research Institute* (Poona), XI. No. 1, 1950; R. V. Joshi, 'Pleistocene Studies in Malaprabhā Basin', *Deccan College Postgraduate and Research Institute and the Karnataka University Publication*, No. 1, 1955.

chopper, and flakes.[24] This discovery proves that the biface extends well beyond the northern limits of peninsular India into the Gaṅgā plains of North India. Sankalia has recently announced a succession of interesting lithic industries found at Nevasa (Ahmednagar, Bombay State)—a hand-axe-cleaver industry, succeeded by a flake-blade and scraper industry, and finally a microlithic industry. It appears from Sankalia's report that Nevasa is a very promising site. Soundara Rajan found a Palaeolithic site at Bhangarh in Alwar District, in South Rajasthan, yielding Madras Abbevillian-Acheulian tool-types.[25] Prufer,[26] Sen,[27] and Lal[28] have reported Soanian (or Sohanian) sites in the Sutlej-Sirsā valleys, in Nalagarh in East Punjab, and in the Beas and Baingaṅgā valleys, in Kangra in East Punjab, respectively. These discoveries in East Punjab prove that the Soan culture is by no means confined to West Pakistan, but is well extended into the plains of East Punjab in India.

So far as the main Lower Palaeolithic cultural development within India is concerned, two distinct lithic traditions or complexes are in the main recognizable: (*a*) a southern biface tradition with associated flakes; and (*b*) a northern pebble and flake tool tradition (the Soanian) generally free of the biface. Besides, a pebble tool complex is also recognizable within (*a*) and (*b*). But the constant association of pebble tools and bifaces in peninsular India, with certain similarity in basic technique, suggests that they may be elements of the same tradition or related to it, whereas the recurring association of pebble tools and flakes free of the biface in North India suggests a different tradition.[29] Since chopper and chopping tools are characteristic of this latter tradition (the Soanian), Movius[30] calls it as chopper-chopping tradition. According to him, the Soanian (North India), the Choukoutienian (North China), the Anyathian (Burma), and the Patjitanian (Java) all belong to the chopper-chopping tool tradition. It appears, however, from the field data at hand, that the three lithic traditions in India are but integral components of one great culture complex.

MESOLITHIC PERIOD

The later periods of the Stone Age in India, viz. the Mesolithic and Neolithic, have been studied in India very imperfectly indeed. Superficial

[24] *Indian Archaeology* (Delhi), 1954-55, p. 58.
[25] *Ibid.*, 1955-56, p. 68.
[26] Olaf Prufer, *The Prehistory of Sirsā Valley, Punjab*, Quarter Band 7-8, 1956.
[27] D. Sen, 'Nalagarh Palaeolithic Culture', *Man in India*, XXXV. No. 3, 1955.
[28] B. B. Lal, 'Palaeoliths from the Beas and Baingaṅgā Valleys, Punjab', *Ancient India*, No. 12, 1956.
[29] D. Sen, 'Lower Palaeolithic Culture Complex and Chronology in India', *Man in India*, XXXIV. No. 2, 1954.
[30] H. L. Movius, Jr., 'The Lower Palaeolithic Cultures of Southern and Eastern Asia', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, XXXVIII. No. 4, 1948.

discoveries of pygmy stone tools have been reported from nearly the whole of the country. But it appears from the various reports that a vast majority of them are of a late age, and that they range in age from prehistoric to historic times. In a few instances, the objects have been assigned to the Proto-Neolithic or Neolithic Age. This was done with respect to a microlithic industry from the Narmadā by De Terra.[31] Todd[32] found a microlithic industry in both Bangalore and Bombay, which succeeded the Upper Palaeolithic. M. H. Krishna[33] described a Mesolithic industry from Mysore which was proved by later excavation to be a part of a Neolithic culture. D. H. Gordon[34] reported a microlithic industry from Maski in Hyderabad, which dates from the third century B.C. to the first century A.D. In the course of excavations at Brahmagiri in Mysore, R. E. M. Wheeler[35] recovered 102 microliths, of which 89 came from layers containing a Chalcolithic polished axe culture. This has been assigned to a period extending from the first millennium B.C. to the second century B.C. Nine microliths were from Iron Age megalithic layers of *circa* second century B.C., and four came from the Andhra layers which range from the middle of the first to the third century A.D.

A. Aiyappan[36] has also described some Mesolithic artifacts from the *teris* (red sand dunes) of Tirunelveli (Tinnevelli), which were first noticed by Foote many years ago. These artifacts include some microliths. The climatic and archaeological reasons given for assigning them to the Mesolithic Age do not, however, appear to be very well founded. Further microlithic sites have been discovered in the *teris* in Tirunelveli in Madras. According to Zeuner and Allchin,[37] these microlithic sites are older than a phase of ancient weathering, and are associated with a sea-level higher than at present. The date tentatively suggested by the authors for the *teri* microlithic industry is Late Atlantic times—about 4000 B.C. The Tirunelveli *teri* industry is characterized by microlithic geometric forms on flakes and blades, together with discoids, small chopping tools, and points, including a number of bifacial pressure-flaked tools, the latter so far unique in India. Thus, in India, the Tirunelveli *teri* sites show some geological antiquity. Subbarao[38] found at Sanganakallu in Bellary a microlithic industry comprising blades and lunates, which were in association with a polished axe

[31] H. de Terra and T. T. Paterson, *op. cit.*, p. 320.
[32] K. R. U. Todd, 'Palaeolithic Industries of Bombay', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, LXIX, 1939.
[33] Presidential Address to the Anthropology Section of the Indian Science Congress, 1942.
[34] 'Microlithic Industries of India', *Man* (London), February 1942.
[35] *Ancient India*, No. 4, 1948.
[36] 'Mesolithic Artifacts from Sawyerpuram in Tinnevelly District, South India', *Spolia Zeylanica*, XXIV. No. 2, 1950.
[37] 'The Microlithic Sites of Tinnevelly District, Madras', *Ancient India*, No. 12, 1956.
[38] *Stone Age Cultures of Bellary* (Deccan College Dissertation Series, No. 7, 1948).

culture of Neolithic Age. An earlier and cruder microlithic industry with patinated flakes was also present. In Gujarat, microliths occur mostly in the Sābarmatī valley as well as in the loess in the interior. A rich microlithic industry has been reported from Langhnaj (Gujarat) from a loessic hill. In the upper layers, microliths occur associated with handmade pottery, while in the lower layers microliths occur without pottery. Animal bones have been found in the pre-pottery microlithic horizon. Generally speaking, a vast majority of the Indian microliths are simple flakes with no retouching. And, as Wheeler has pointed out, the artifacts are mostly not 'of sufficiently evolved types to enable us to group them with any assurance typologically'. Some of the sites, however, have yielded true microlithic types. If we compare the typology of the tools, some of them seem to bear striking similarity with specimens belonging to the Natufian, Capsian, and Tardenoisean cultures. It is only after further detailed work that we shall be able to find out if a true microlithic culture actually came between the Palaeolithic and Neolithic Ages in India.

NEOLITHIC AGE

Very little has been recorded regarding the find-spots or levels at which the Neolithic cultures were discovered, and many of the collections were actually made from the surface of the ground. Yet, these collections reveal an interesting assortment of characteristic objects, such as stone-celts, adzes, chisels, picks, fabricators, ring-stones, hammer-stones, pounders, mortars, discs, slick-stones, and sling-stones, but the largest number is formed by celts of different varieties. The first discovery of Neolithic objects was made in Uttar Pradesh by Le Mesurier in 1860. In 1872, Fraser made some important discoveries in Bellary. This was followed up by Foote in many parts of southern India. According to Coggin Brown, the Foote collection in the Madras Museum contains as many as 72 types of tools. Celts and other artifacts have also been reported from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Orissa, Bengal, and Assam by Roy, Anderson, Das Gupta, Coggin Brown, Cockburn, and Ball.

True Neolithic culture is marked not only by ground and polished stone-celts and pottery, but also by agriculture and domesticated animals. Such evidence is hardly forthcoming in India. But some recent work reveals the possibility of fruitful results, if sufficient intensive work is directed to this end. De Terra carried out a trial excavation at a megalithic site named Burzahom near Srinagar in Kashmir. The excavation revealed in a post-glacial loess deposit the presence of polished celts, bone awls, and pottery. A layer on top of this contained polished, black-coloured pottery, which recalled the Jhangar ware of the Indus valley civilization. A somewhat similar industry was also located by Paterson at Nunar in Kashmir.

Recently, Piggott[39] has expressed the opinion that the Jhangar ware of the Indus valley would not be later than the middle of the second millennium B.C., which means that the date of the Kashmir polished celts would not go beyond the third mllennium B.C. This dating is, however, tentative.

M. H. Krishna found at Chandravalli in Mysore a layer containing polished tools lying underneath a layer of the Iron Age. This is in agreement with Wheeler's series established at Brahmagiri in Mysore. The Chalcolithic axe culture at Brahmagiri, which has been dated as lying beyond the second century B.C., but not earlier than one millennium B.C., is characterized by polished celts having a 'V'-shaped butt, crude microliths, handmade pottery, and two objects made of copper.[40]

Subbarao worked at a site named Sanganakallu in Bellary, and discovered a layer rich in chipped and polished stone-axes, coarse brown, black, and grey pottery, and microliths below a layer of megalithic pottery mixed with stone-axes. The following sequence has been established in Sanganakallu:

Megalithic pottery, phase III
Neolithic stone-axe culture, phase II
Thin sterile layer
Patinated flakes and crude microliths, phase I.

Phases II and III of the above sequence have been equated with Wheeler's series at Brahmagiri, from which it follows that the date of the Sanganakallu Neolithic culture cannot go beyond the first millennium B.C.

The antiquity of the Neolithic cultures of Kashmir, Bellary, and Mysore does not therefore carry us beyond the first millennium, which is indeed a very late date for such cultures in India.

Eugene C. Worman (Jr.)[41] has suggested that the earliest Neolithic-like stone tools appeared in India probably not earlier than 3500 or 2500 B.C., and various types were also introduced into the country at different dates. On comparison with the Neolithic sites of South-East Asia, he believes that Indian Neolithic celts belonged to the same culture group as those of the other regions, particularly of Indo-China. Moreover, the distribution of smooth stone-celts is limited to Assam, Bengal, Orissa, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh and in central and southern portions of India. This contiguous territory is bounded in the north by the Gaṅgā plain, in the south by Pudukottai in Madras, and in the west, by a line drawn south-south-west

[39] Stuart Piggott, *Prehistoric India*, 1950.
[40] *Ancient India*, No. 4, 1948.
[41] 'The "Neolithic" Problem in the Prehistory of India', *Journal of the Washington Academy of Sciences*, XXXIX. No. 6, 1949.

from Lucknow to Goa. There are, however, a few exceptions to the distribution sketched above, for sporadic finds have been reported from Kashmir, Punjab, Sind, and Baluchistan. In peninsular India, however, the neighbourhood of Bellary seems to have been an important centre, while, in the east, Mayurbhanj, Manbhum, and Singhbhum seem to have formed parts of another important culture centre.

Following Worman's contention referred to above, it is not unlikely that certain celt types and techniques, as found in eastern and southern India, may have been introduced into India at different times from South-East Asia, particularly from Indo-China through the corridors of Burma and Assam. A word here may be said about the occurrence of shouldered adze which has been found to be confined solely to eastern India. This tool-type is dominant in Late Neolithic of Indo-China, and has almost a continuous distribution in Burma, Assam, Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa.

True Neolithic culture, however, must, in the first instance, be identified by its primary traits, viz. agriculture and domestication of animals, and secondly, by pottery and technique of grinding and polishing. Such an association of traits has not yet been established in our studies on Neolithic India.

II

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

A variety of problems thus confronts the prehistorian in India. The time when prehistoric men lived in India has been very roughly fixed on the geological time-scale ; there is yet no general unity of opinion on the relation between the glacial cycle of the North and pluvial cycle or terrace sequences of the South ; the tools and implements which have been recovered from various parts of India yet remain to be adequately described and classified. Thus, by and large, our knowledge of the Stone Age in India is open to large-scale improvement ; and such improvement can come only from much more intensive investigation limited to particular fields than has yet been generally in evidence.

It would, however, be unfair to end this account with a mere recital of the limitations of our knowledge or a dry formulation of the technical aspects of the questions involved. We shall therefore attempt to present here a picture of the kind of life which we can envisage in the case of early man, even if the picture seems to be sketchy or vague in outline. It is indeed significant that many of the tools which have been discovered in India have a striking similarity with Stone Age industries of East and South Africa, as well as of Europe. The material of the African tools is often

of the same kind as in peninsular India and is different from that of Europe. We may therefore say, on the basis of similarity of types, that India belonged to a vast culture area, characterized by the predominance of hand-axes, which stretched all the way from the British Isles to as far as India. If the tools of Java can be equated with those of India, then the area extended as far as that island in the east. But the Javan tools are typologically not well defined, and an exact identification with Indian types is yet premature. Wherever the eastern boundary might have been, the area covered by similar types of hand-axes remains vast, even according to modern standards. It is doubtful if very similar forms of tools could have been evolved in different countries absolutely independent of one another; so, a cultural relationship is obviously indicated.

In any case, whatever the source or extent of these early cultures may have been, we know that in those days man eked out a precarious existence by hunting and collecting wild roots, leaves, and fruits from the forests near by. There was hardly any trade in essential commodities. Indeed, there was no surplus; man lived on the edge of his needs. It must have therefore taken enormous stretches of time for standard types of tools to have spread by diffusion over such a wide portion of the earth as one extending from western Europe to India. And during this long period of time, human culture continued to be more or less uniform. Technologically, however, the tools exhibit a gradual evolution from crude to finer types.

In later times, special types of Neolithic tools, which have been discovered in eastern or southern India and in South-East Asia, suggest a closer historical relationship or commonness of origin. But the facts are yet so inadequately known that they merely give us clues for further inquiry and observation rather than any certainty of conviction.

The extreme emphasis upon stone tools should not lead one to think that this was the only thing which man used in those early days. Even in this age of metals, we use in our daily life numerous objects like cotton or paper which are easily perishable and leave very little or no trace behind, while objects of stone or metal may endure for ages after they are discarded. In the same manner, early man must have used leaves and barks of trees and their twigs, branches, and wood for various purposes. Many of the stone tools must have had handles, which could either be of wood or bone. The thongs or creepers with which the tools were lashed to their handles have also left no trace behind. Even now, or a few decades ago, there used to be men whose only tools were made of bone or stone and wood, whose dress was no more than the leaves of trees, or whose shelter consisted of nothing more than wind-breaks or screens made from the twigs and branches of trees. From a comparison of their stone industry with the industrial

remains of the past, various attempts have been successfully made at filling in the gaps in our story of the life of man in very ancient times.

In the Palaeolithic or Early Stone Age, men apparently lived near water courses; for their tools in India, and also elsewhere, have generally been found in river deposits, often by the side of vanished streams. Perhaps this particular fancy for riversides may have been due to two reasons. Animals come there for watering, while men also had then no vessels in which to store water. The stone tools which have been called hand-axes, choppers, etc. were of uses unknown to us. We have imagined from their form and working edges some functions for which they might have been used, and then we have given them names according to our fancy. It is not unimaginable that the tools might have been used for purposes or in ways far different from those of which we have thought. Thus, though it has been generally assumed that hand-axes were for killing and disposing game which prehistoric man entrapped, it has also been suggested that, as they mostly occur in regions covered by forest in Palaeolithic times, it is equally probable that they were employed in digging up roots and tubers from the soft earth. This is only a sample of the insecure condition of our knowledge at the present stage.

Unfortunately, in India, we have not so far found anything like a habitation used by early man, nor his skeletal remains. The caves in Kurnool and Alicoor in South India do promise to hold some such evidence, but that source yet remains to be properly tapped. Since there is as yet no skeletal evidence of fossil man in India, we do not know who were the makers of these lithic industries.

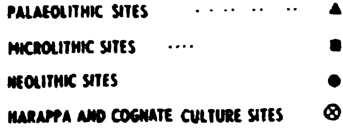
Long ages must have passed when man lived under warm skies, near forests, with numerous animals, and when his primary occupation was hunting and collecting wild vegetable products which nature provided in abundance. Then a revolution came, not merely in the way in which he made or finished his stone tools, but also in the entire mode of his life. Tools in former times were fashioned by fracturing and delicately chipping suitable blocks of stone. But now man invented the finer art of rubbing or grinding his tools on stone, until the latter came to have a superior working edge. An injured tool in Palaeolithic times had often to be thrown away; but now, with grinding, it could once more be rendered serviceable. There was thus an economy of effort, and there was a correspondingly greater command over the materials with which tools were made.

Neolithic times were also marked by earthenware of one kind or another, which means that, before the use of wheels for turning, pots also had to be made by hand. In the Nicobar Islands, as in Java, and also in portions of Assam, there are traces of handmade pottery even in modern

times. In India, less work has been done on the Neolithic than on the Palaeolithic period, so that here we have nothing to say in comparison with the vast amount of evidence which has accumulated in regard to the Neolithic cultures of Switzerland, Germany, France, England, or elsewhere. But we can imagine that some of the burials in which large blocks of stone were erected on graves in India, in the early Metal Ages, may have already started in earlier Neolithic times.

What this means in terms of human civilization is nothing short of a revolution. Men now cared for the dead, gave them a decent, and socially recognized, honourable burial ; they left food for the dead, and sometimes also interred the objects which the individual had used in life. A growing concern not merely for the immediate present, but for times which stretched beyond into the past as well as the future is newly indicated, which means that man was well in advance of his ancestors, in so far as life and thought were concerned.

A few carvings on rocks in India were originally supposed to have belonged to the New Stone Age. But later researches have cast serious doubts about their antiquity. We know, however, that Neolithic tools have sometimes been found in India in large numbers within a restricted space. This would mean that the same place served as the habitation of man for many years. The sedentary nature of residence becomes possible only when a steady supply of food is available at the same place. If man had all the time to run about after wild game, and take shelter in make-shift dwellings, his stone tools could not have gathered in heaps at one single place. The fact that such sites have been discovered in layers containing ground and polished celts would indicate that perhaps man had taken to growing food, instead of merely gathering it from nature's abundance, though we have no positive evidence yet to that effect in the Indian field. Regarding domestication of animals also, there is no reliable data that it was in vogue in India in Neolithic times.


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SCALE 0 100 200 300 MILES
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INDUS VALLEY CIVILIZATION

THE epoch-making discoveries made by the Archaeological Survey of India, in the twenties of this century, at the city-sites of Harappā in Montgomery District of the Punjab and Mohenjo-daro in Larkana District of Sind, have revealed to us that, in the third millennium B.C., a full-fledged civilization, already age old and stereotyped, flourished on Indian soil based upon a highly developed urban economy and discipline.

NAME, EXTENT, AND NATURE

At present more than eighty sites* are known, which have yielded characteristic elements of this civilization, extending over a large area between Rupar in the north, below the Simla Hills, and Sutkagen-dor, a site about 300 miles west of Karachi near the Arabian Sea. These sites are mainly towns or villages of the plains, and line the courses of the river Sindhu (Indus) and its tributaries and also along the former courses of Ghaggar and Hakra, which passed through the former States of Bahawalpur and Bikaner in western India. In contrast to this uniform riverine culture spreading over a large area along the river systems of the plains, we find innumerable cognate village cultures, such as Quetta, Amri, Nal, Zhob, Kulli, etc. (either earlier, contemporary, or later), lying in the hills of the west. But these village cultures do not lend any knowledge as to the origin of this civilization which, at the present stage of excavation, appears to be fully grown. And, as such, further excavations are needed before we can understand its earlier context.

Owing to the fact that the mounds of Harappā had attracted attention as far back as 1826, scholars generally prefer to call this civilization by the name of 'Harappā Culture', after the established custom of modern archaeology. Further, as the elements of this civilization have been noticed at various places, between the Himalayas and the Arabian Sea, mainly along the Sindhu and the former Ghaggar systems, but not in the Gaṅgā-Yamunā plain, this civilization is also known as the Indus valley civilization.

The finds recovered from the excavations carried out at Harappā and Mohenjo-daro have pushed the antiquity of Indian civilization far back into the past and enabled India to make a dramatic entry into, and claim an

* For some important sites see map on p. 109.

important place among, the countries of 'the most ancient East'.[1] India must henceforth be recognized, along with Iran, Mesopotamia, and Egypt, as one of the most important areas where the civilizing processes of society were initiated and developed. Common to them all were the use, for implements, of stone, though rare, side by side with copper or bronze, domestication of animals, knowledge of agriculture, organized city life, well-developed pictographic writing, and conscious art. And yet, no less distinctive and peculiar to Sind and the Punjab was the Indus valley culture than was the Sumerian culture to Mesopotamia or the Egyptian to the valley of the Nile. For instance, the use of cotton was confined to the Indus valley, whereas flax was used in the valley of the Nile for thinner textiles ; nor can the Great Bath of Mohenjo-daro or the Great Granary of Harappā be compared to anything similar in the above-named countries. And whereas in the West Asian countries much money and thought were lavished on the building of magnificent temples for the gods, and on the palaces and tombs of kings, the picture was quite different in the Indus valley, where the finest structures were erected for the convenience of the citizens. Equally peculiar to the Indus valley are its art and religion.

CLIMATIC CONDITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

At present, the Indus plain, except narrow strips along the sides of the rivers and artificially irrigated areas, is a mere desert covered with desert-scrub and bushy trees like tamarisk. But that the climatic conditions during the third millennium B.C. were more congenial than they are at present can be proved from the fact that the fauna represented in the Indus seals, such as buffalo, tiger, rhinoceros, and elephant, which must have been noticed by the Harappan artists, but many of which are not found today, implies, to some extent, marshy conditions with jungle. Further, the use of costly burnt bricks, instead of sun-dried bricks, by the Harappans probably also reflects a wetter climate. But it must be remembered that perhaps the basic climatic change was not the main reason for the decay of the Indus civilization. From our knowledge derived through the excavations, it seems that excessive deforestation (partly done by the Indus brick-makers), fall in the agricultural standard, and other such socio-economic factors, as also the foreign invasion, probably of the Aryans, brought about the destruction of the Harappā civilization.

From the finds at the sites, we may infer the various countries and places with which the Indus valley people were in contact. Chank, coral, and mussel shells presuppose communication with the sea ; steatite, copper, and

[1] V. Gordon Childe, *New Light on the Most Ancient East* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 2nd Ed., London, 1952).

SITE PLAN OF MOHENJO-DARO

MUD BRICK EXPOSURES MARKED

GREAT BATH

STŪPA

WALL A

COLLEGE

CITADEL

STŪPA MOUND

PILLARED HALL

DK AREA

DK AREA

TO HARAPPA 400 MILES

SITE PLAN OF HARAPPĀ

RIVER BED

GRANARIES

WORKING FLOORS

WORKMEN'S QUARTERS

N. GATEWAY

W. GATEWAYS AND TERRACES

CITADEL MOUND AB

HARAPPĀ VILLAGE

MOUND E

POLICE STATION

CEMETERY H

CEMETERY R 37

RUINED SERAI

TO MOHENJO-DARO 400 MILES

TO MONTGOMERY 16 MILES

HARAPPĀ

EXCAVATED BUILDINGS & CEMETERY

FORTIFICATION INVESTIGATED IN 1946

INFERRED FORTIFICATION

SCALE OF FEET 100 0 200 400 600 800 1000 1200 1400

SCALE OF METRES 100 50 0 100 200 300 400

A.S.I. 1946.

COMPARATIVE PLANS OF THE PRINCIPAL MOUNDS AT MOHENJO-DARO AND HARAPPĀ

lead with Rajasthan—for copper, southern Afghanistan and the extreme west of Baluchistan, and for lead, the Karadagh in North Iran, being other sources ; agate, agate-jasper, carnelian, onyx, and chalcedony with Kathiawad and Rajpipla ; gold with South India and Afghanistan, the latter being also a possible source of silver ; haematite and red ochre with Hormuz and other islands in the Persian Gulf ; slate with Rajasthan, and Gurgaon and Kangra Districts ; amazonite with Gujarat and Kashmir ; crystal with Tanjore, Kathiawad, and Mianwali Districts ; turquoise with Khorasan ; lapis lazuli with Badakhshan ; and jadeite with the Pamirs. It may thus be assumed that there must have been frequent communication with all these places, as well as with the contemporary centres of culture in India and Baluchistan, by sea, river, and overland. The means used for such communication and trade were boats and country craft, chariots, bullock carts (Pl. VI. 20),* and pack animals such as oxen, buffaloes, and goats.

STRUCTURAL FEATURES, CIVIL AMENITIES, AND ADMINISTRATION

Both the towns of Harappā and Mohenjo-daro were each roughly more than 3 miles in circuit, and the mounds of each place (see plans on p. 112) can be divided into two groups: a high mound towards the west and a series of lower mounds extending over a larger area to the east. Seven strata of occupation have so far been uncovered at Mohenjo-daro. Beginning from the top, they have been grouped into three main periods, namely, Late, Intermediate, and Early phases. The above subdivision into periods is marked by distinct intervals of time, which separate the Early from the Intermediate and the Intermediate from the Late phase, but the best buildings belong to the Intermediate phase, when trade and commerce seem to have flourished in the city. The Early phase of Mohenjo-daro has been only partially uncovered, as the lower strata are water-logged, owing to rise in the level of subsoil water. The nearest branch of the river Sindhu is now three miles away from the city of Mohenjo-daro, but it has been suspected that formerly it was close to the northern end of the citadel. It must also be borne in mind that the city was several times exposed to the ravages of the Sindhu floods, which once constituted a source of constant anxiety to the city authorities. Similarly, at Harappā also, not less than six distinct occupational levels of buildings have been uncovered at one mound. Here, too, they have been divided into three main phases like those of Mohenjo-daro, the Intermediate phase being associated with the best building activities. The river Ravi, which now flows six miles further north of the citadel of Harappā, was close to it in the third millennium B.C.

* For Plates see at the end of the chapter.

In Mohenjo-daro, between the citadel and the main city, there is a north to south street which crosses another street from east to west (the East Street), coming through the city almost at right angles, and at its north end turns east to join a main street of the city (the First Street) to which it runs parallel. These thoroughfares link up the entire city by means of feeder streets, lanes, and bylanes, the latter also running generally at right angles to them. The alignment of thoroughfares and streets did not change with the various phases of occupation. The thoroughfares were each more than half a mile long and fourteen to thirty-three feet wide. The lanes and bylanes, even though crooked at times, were not fortuitous, and, usually, the lanes were four to six feet wide. Another feature of the streets and lanes was the underground drainage, though water discharged from smaller drains coming out of the houses or bylanes was collected into cesspools, which were built either entirely of masonry or with earthenware jars enclosed. The advance made in town planning in the Indus valley would be properly understood when it is pointed out that no town planning existed at the town of Ur in Mesopotamia as late as 2000 B.C., though there are traces of some planning at Babylon about this date and also in the twelfth Dynasty town of Kahun in Egypt. A fortification wall has been traced round the citadel mounds both at Harappā and Mohenjo-daro. The wall at Harappā has a deep foundation of sun-dried brick, and almost from above the ground level, it was protected on the outside by a revetment of burnt brick, which now survives only in small bits.

If the town was well planned, so also were the individual houses with due regard to convenience of accommodation and sanitary amenities. Ordinarily, middle class houses had a number of rooms built round the courtyard, and frequently one of the component parts was a bath-room or at least a wainscotted floor which could be used for bathing. Quite a large number of houses at Mohenjo-daro had their own wells, which, in many cases, were accessible to neighbours also. At Harappā, however, the wells were few, not more than six having been found, though, perhaps, they were all available to the public. Drains from bath-rooms, courtyards, and other parts of the houses were quite common. At Mohenjo-daro, earthenware drain pipes have also been found. Latrines were fairly common, and rubbish-chutes were also not unknown. Frequently, cesspools, either structural or lined with pottery jars, were connected with drains coming out of houses, but sometimes they were converted into soak-pits by knocking out the bottom of the jar lining them or by not paving the structure. Windows and clerestory windows were also provided in the houses, which were open generally on two sides and not infrequently on three or all the

four sides, an example of the latter being the Workmen's Quarters[1] at Harappā. From the regular alignment of thoroughfares, lanes, and bylanes, on which encroachments appear to have been rigidly prevented, and the elaborate sanitary arrangements referred to above, it may be concluded that some sort of efficient municipal administration must surely have existed.

A number of public buildings such as the Great Bath (Pl. I), and possibly a monastery with a double row of bath-rooms in one alignment to its east, the large halls with long platforms which may have been used as open stalls in the market-place to the south of them, all lying in the citadel mound at Mohenjo-daro; the Great Granary, a number of circular platforms, occurring in a double row outside the citadel mound towards the north-west, and such other features of Harappā, throw some light on the social life and customs of the people.

The most remarkable and imposing of all the remains referred to above is the Great Bath situated in the citadel mound at Mohenjo-daro. It measures 180 ft. from north to south and 108 ft. from east to west. Its outer walls, which are particularly massive, were 7 to 8 ft. thick at the base with a batter on the outside, most of the inner walls being about half as much. Its plan is simple: in the centre, there is an open paved quadrangle with verandahs on four sides, at the back of which are various galleries and rooms, except on the west side; on the south, there is a large hall with a small chamber at each end; along the east, a single range of chambers, including one with a well; and on the north, a group of several halls and fair-sized rooms. In the centre of the paved quadrangle, there is a large swimming-bath, some 39 ft. long by 23 ft. broad and sunk about 8 ft. below the pavement, with a flight of steps leading down the centre of the smaller sides to a low platform for the convenience of bathers. From one of the chambers on the east rises a flight of steps to the upper storey, which was presumably built on the plan of the ground floor. The well on the east was, it seems, used for filling the tank, although water may also have been brought in from outside. The used water of the tank was taken away through a corbelled drain on the west, of which the roof is 6 ft. 6 in. high and through which a man of average size could easily pass erect. In the construction of the swimming-bath, every possible precaution was taken to make it water-tight. The tank was lined with finely dressed brick laid in gypsum mortar with an inch thick backing of damp-proof course of bitumen.

[1] For illustrations of this and various other antiquities such as toilet and cosmetic objects; articles of daily use; tools, implements, and weapons; seals, figurines, and objects used in worship; paintings on potteries; etc., see Sir John Marshall, *Mohenjo-daro and the Indus Civilization* in 3 vols. (Arthur Probsthain, London, 1931); E. Mackay, *Further Excavations at Mohenjo-daro* in 2 vols. (Delhi, 1938); M. S. Vats, *Excavations at Harappā* in 2 vols. (Delhi, 1940).

At Harappā, the most remarkable and the largest building is the Great Granary, which consists of two precisely similar blocks, together measuring 169 ft. from north to south and 135 ft. from east to west, separated from each other by an aisle, 23 ft. wide. Each block comprises six halls, measuring 51 ft. 9 in. long by 17 ft. 6 in. broad, alternating regularly with five corridors of similar length, but 5 ft. 6 in. wide, in all cases the walls rising to a uniform height of 3 ft. 10 in. above their foundations. Every one of the halls is partitioned into four narrow divisions by means of three equidistant, full-length walls which terminate in broader piers at the ends. Excepting the piers, which are invariably made of burnt brick, the partition walls are of mixed construction. This extraordinary structure was a public building of great importance for the whole city. When there was no currency and taxes had to be paid in kind, the public treasury must have taken the form of great storehouses, which was the case in other countries as well, such as the long and narrow storehouses attached to the Minoan palaces at Knossos and Phaestus in Crete. These granaries bear a close analogy to those attached to many Roman forts in ancient Britain.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL LIFE

Before dealing with the objects of everyday life, it must be remembered that, in general, the finds of all classes associated with the various phases of the two cities are so uniform that it is impossible to distinguish those of one from the other. The household utensils were made of pottery, faience, stone, copper, bronze, silver, and ivory, of which pottery was the commonest (Pl. II ; Pl. III. 1-5, 8). Those of faience were usually small or tiny vessels, generally used as unguent vases or for keeping other cosmetics. This purpose was also served by small vessels of ivory, silver, copper, and stone, and where the base was pointed, it rested on a flat-bottomed stand (Pl. III. 27). A medium sized silver goblet (Pl. III. 8) from Mohenjo-daro was found to contain jewellery. Vessels of copper or bronze (Pl. III. 1-5) included dishes with tapering sides, bowls, goblets and tumblers with or without covers, cups with tapering sides, saucers, ladles, flasks, imitations of river shells, broad open vases, frying pans, carinated cooking pots, sometimes covered with inverted dishes, etc. ; but they were not in common use. Stone vessels were rare and offered but a few varieties of simple shapes.

Pottery vessels used by the people of the Harappā civilization include both plain and painted pottery, and, with a few exceptions, they are all wheel-made. Most of the pottery is of pinkish colour with a bright red slip, and when decorated, it was done in black. A few polychrome wares have also been found. On the whole, the pottery vessels may be divided into vessels for food and drink, and those for cooking, storage, and other purposes.

The simplest food vessels were plain, flat dishes (Pl. II. 2-4), sometimes with a ring base, and handled cups with slightly tapering or concave sides. There were also other varieties of dishes, cups, bowls, and basins. Of drinking vessels, the most typical were scored, pointed pots (Pl. II. 5). Next in number were the beakers, tumblers, goblets, pedestal-vases, and a variety of other shapes. The heaps of drinking-cups in public drains and dumps of potsherds remind one of the present-day Indian custom of using them once and then throwing them away immediately. Carinated vases (Pl. II. 10), some of which bore marks of soot, were used for cooking. For the storage of cereals and other commodities, however, much larger vessels of various shapes were used. They were either embedded in the ground or placed on jar-stands (Pl. III. 27). Quite a different class of vessels, and of a much smaller size, was used for the storage of more precious liquids such as oils (Pl. II. 8, 9). They are characterized by a flat bottom, wide belly, and narrow mouth to prevent their contents from easily spilling out. A vessel of frequent occurrence was the perforated, flat-bottomed cylinder (Pl. II. 14), often choked with ashes, which points to its use as a heater of some sort. Lids (Pl. II. 12), stoppers, and covers have also been found. Of the painted pottery, the commonest design consists of horizontal black lines of various thicknesses painted over red-slipped background. Other motifs include various leaf-patterns (notably pipal), intersecting circles, scales, lattice-work, chequers, cross-hatchings, and rosette-like floral designs. Besides these common designs, there are also some representations of peacocks, pipal trees, fish, etc. Excepting a few caprids, none of the animals, which have been so beautifully executed on the seals, appear on the pottery.

Toilet and cosmetic objects include handled copper-mirrors, ivory combs with handle or toothed on both sides, antimony rods, animal-headed stoppers, and toilet sets of copper, consisting of a piercer, ear-scoop, and tweezers. Among finer objects of daily use may be mentioned a beam of a weighing scale, numerous cuboid chert weights, highly polished and exquisitely finished shell spoons and feeding cups, slate palettes, etc.

For their daily needs, the Indus people depended on a variety of tools, implements, and weapons, mostly of copper or bronze. From such tools as awls and needles, of which the latter were also made of gold and ivory; razors (Pl. III. 16), knives, and sickles, the knives being also made of chert flakes; goads, fish-hooks, and gouges (Pl. III. 19, 20), the latter being sometimes fitted with strong alabaster handles; chisels (Pl. III. 22-24), which were of bare metal, shanked or tanged for handles and employed for manifold purposes; choppers and saws (Pl. III. 14, 17); and axes, ploughshares, smoothing planes (Pl. III. 18), and flaying knives, which were found

at the sites, an idea can be formed of the different facets of the life of the Indus people. Simple axes of copper or bronze had a sharp, convex edge, tapering on both sides, and were either plain or emphasized in the form of shoulders. Unfinished double axes (Pl. III. 25) of a rather small size have also been found. The more developed, but late forms employed for hewing were the socketed axe and adze-axe (Pl. III. 15). A small granite celt, quite well finished, was found at Harappā associated with the early phase of the Intermediate period. For grinding corn, the saddle quern was used. Stone dishes were hollowed by means of circular stone borers (Pl. III. 21), plano-convex in section and with concave cuts at opposite points for rotating them by means of a bifurcated handle. Weapons of offence (Pl. III) met with are small in number, limited in varieties and shapes, comprising spears and daggers, lance-heads, single- or double-edged swords, mace-heads, and arrow-heads.

That the Indus people had a knowledge of metallurgy is proved by the presence, in various types, of copper tools and weapons, of an alloy of tin usually varying from 6 to 11 per cent, or of arsenic from ·5 to 2 per cent. The mixing of the requisite quantities of tin or arsenic with copper so as to obtain a combination of strength, elasticity, toughness, and ability to withstand shock would not have been possible without a knowledge of the metallurgical processes. Alloys of tin from 8 to 11 per cent are considered most suitable for bronze implements, and only rarely are the specimens of bronze from Harappā and Mohenjo-daro found to exceed that limit. Gold and silver are also found in both sites from early strata onwards. The intricate shapes and designs of jewellery show how conversant the artisans were with the elaborate delicacies of their trade.

The inhabitants of Harappā, besides the cultivation of wheat and barley, evidence of which has also been found at Mohenjo-daro, cultivated peas and sesamum too. The finds of a lemon-leaf-shaped pendant, polychrome vases in the shape of a cocoa-nut and pomegranate, and the pericarp of a seed of the melon variety, seem to suggest that the Indus valley people used these also for food. Besides, they depended a great deal on animal food, as well as on fishes, for, at Harappā, there is hardly a place where animal and fish bones were not upturned by the spade.

The art of domestication of animals was also known to these people, and the domesticated animals include cats, dogs, humped cattle, goats and sheep, buffaloes, and (doubtfully) pigs whose bones occur in quantity. Other animals and birds that were known to these people can be guessed from the terracotta figurines, or from their representations in the seals, which include humpless cattle, monkeys, elephants, hares, doves, parrots and other birds, and many wild animals, such as bison, rhinoceros, tiger,

bear, sambur, and spotted deer, some of which are no longer to be found in the Indus valley (Plates V and VI). Likewise, they were also familiar with peacock, goose, owl, eagle, snake, scorpion, frog, fish, tortoise, and crocodile. No portraiture or remains of the camel, horse, or cat have been found so far in the cities of Mohenjo-daro and Harappā in the typical Harappā period.

Besides animal toys, playthings and games (Pl. VI) include carts and chariots of several shapes, including bird and animal chariots ; bird-whistles ; animals with revolving or moving heads ; bird-cages ; cake-moulds ; therio-morphic and other vessels ; representations of basket work ; rattles of several shapes ; play marbles of chert, alabaster, black marble, red stone, faience, and chank ; gamesmen of tetrahedral or chessman shape in stone, faience, shell, and terracotta ; rolling discs ; and cubical dice of stone, faience, and terracotta.

ARTS AND CRAFTS

Besides pottery and metal implements, seals, statuary, and jewellery form major objects of their arts and crafts. The Indus seals and sealings may be divided into three classes: (*i*) large intaglio seals of steatite and terracotta, intended for making impressions (Pl. V) ; (*ii*) miniature seals or amulets of steatite, not intended for making impressions ; and (*iii*) seals and sealings of terracotta or faience made from moulds with devices and inscriptions in relief. The seals of the second group and the tiny sealings of faience included in the third group are peculiar to the earlier levels of Harappā, and were probably carried about as amulets. They are characterized by the absence of any knob or hole and of the animals found on the seals of the first group, by an archaic type of writing, and by a limited range of inscriptions which are not infrequently repeated. In the order of frequency, those of the first group include square seals, with or without a perforated boss on the reverse ; rectangular ones with convex back, perforated with one or two holes, or with plane back with or without a boss ; cube seals ; rhomboid seals with deeply indented edges ; and discoid and T-shaped seals. There are also a few cylinder seals. With the exception of those of terracotta and one or two others, which are likely to be importations, seals of the first and the second group were made of steatite, of which the prevailing colour was green, less frequently whitish, and occasionally of a deeper tinge ranging from dark green to blue. In the majority of cases, work is so neatly done that even curved lines, such as those needed for the horns of the animals or for inscriptions with some difficult characters, were cut without hesitation and with the greatest amount of accuracy. The seals are so exquisitely finished and bleached uniformly white that the colour of the original is completely

hidden beneath a thin coating or veneer of steatite applied before firing, by which process they also become considerably harder.

The script which the Indus people invented for their writing belongs to the same order as other quasi-pictographic scripts of this period, such as the Proto-Elamitic, Early Sumerian, Minoan, or Egyptian, and remains still to be deciphered. The signs used in this script were, to a large extent, pictographic in their origin ; they had long since become standardized and reduced to such forms as are now susceptible of identification, though, on the other hand, they are not so conventionalized by usage as to have become mere stereotyped summaries, as it were, like the cuneiform characters of Mesopotamia.[3] Ordinarily, the direction of writing is from right to left, but when there is more than one line, it is *boustrophedon,* that is, the direction of writing the lines is alternately from right to left and left to right. According to Langdon, there is a strong case for deriving the Brāhmī alphabet from the Indus script.

On account of their excellent workmanship, certain figurines designed on various materials may be regarded as works of art. Notable among them are a powerfully modelled bull in terracotta ; an exquisite mastiff-like figure in steatite ; two seated rams, also in the same material ; a number of squirrels, monkeys, and representations of goat, rhinoceros, parrot, owl (Pl. VI. 11, 13-17), pigeon, goose, fish, and snake in steatite or faience. As against these, however, the human statuary in stone from Mohenjo-daro, comprising only a few sadly mutilated images, is not of a high order, and compares unfavourably with the two nude torsos of excellent workmanship from Harappā (Pl. VII. 3, 4). The best, however, among the Mohenjo-daro statuary is the bust in steatite of what may represent a conventional type of deity or religious teacher with eyes half closed (Pl. VII. 1). It is finished with a coating of hard white paste. The shawl he wears over his left shoulder and under the right arm is decorated with trefoil pattern. Round his head is a fillet with a circular buckle in the centre ; there is a similar buckle on the right arm. He has a short beard and whiskers and a closely cut moustache. The lips are thick, nose broad based, forehead low, and neck stunted. The statuette of a dancing girl in bronze (Pl. VII. 2), though of rough workmanship, shows quite effective modelling of the back, hips, and buttocks, implying sound observation on the part of the artist. Among the most outstanding finds from Harappā are the small torso (height 3¾ in.) of a nude male figure carved in the round in red sandstone and the figure of a dancer in dark grey slate (Pl. VII. 3, 4). In both, there are socket-holes in the neck and shoulders for the attachment of head and arms which were

[3] Cf. Sir John Marshall, *Mohenjo-daro and the Indus Civilization,* I. pp. 39-40.

made in separate pieces. These statuettes are incomparably superior to any so far found at Mohenjo-daro. The former is a work of which a Greek of the fourth century B.C. might well have been proud. And yet the set of the figure, with its rather pronounced abdomen, is characteristically Indian. The latter figure of the dancer, standing on his right leg with the body above the waist bent well round to the left, is full of movement and vivacity.

The intaglio engravings of animals on the seals and the modelling of Harappā statuettes are distinguished by a breadth of treatment and feeling for line and plastic form that have been rarely surpassed in glyptic or sculptural art.

Jewellery of the Indus valley people comprised *chauks*, fillets, ribbons, brooches, and hair-pins, ear- and nose-ornaments, necklaces and pendants, armlets, bracelets and bangles, finger-rings, and girdles. *Chauks* were found in ivory, faience, steatite, pottery, and gold, and were conical or hemispherical in shape. Fillets and ribbons of gold were worn round the head both by males and females to keep the hair in position. Brooches were of the shapes of '8' and four-pointed star. Ear-ornaments took the form of buttons, studs, drops, and pendants. The nose-pins in gold consisted of convex discs with cabled border, or plane, cogwheel-shaped discs threaded by means of a pin. Depressions on them were inlaid with coloured pastes; an eight-petalled flower was found inlaid alternately with lapis lazuli and red stone. Necklaces comprised beads of one or more shapes strung together with pendant beads or a single pendant made of gold, silver, stone, or faience. When there was more than one string, appropriate spacers with terminals at the ends were introduced to control the strands. Armlets, bracelets, or bangles were found in very large numbers in terracotta, shell, stoneware, faience, copper, silver, and gold. Finger-rings were found in gold, silver, alabaster, marble, and faience.

Besides odd pieces of jewellery, three hoards were found at Mohenjo-daro and one at Harappā. The Harappā hoard, which is a representative collection, consists of gold, silver, stone, faience, and shell objects (Pl. VIII).

RELIGION

It is difficult to form a clear idea about the true contents of the Harappan religion or religions from the materials unearthed at Indus valley sites. Further, it must be remembered that it is a great problem to draw a line between the secular and religious concepts of such an early culture. It is under these limitations that an attempt is made here to trace the religious ideas of the Indus valley people.

As no structure has been discovered at Mohenjo-daro or Harappā which can definitely be identified as a temple, we are forced to fall back on seals,

a number of clay sealings, some copper tablets, a variety of small figurines of terracotta, faience, and metal, and a few stone images in the round to form an idea of their religion. Most striking, and extremely common, among these are the female figurines (Pl. VI. 1-5, 7, 8) of terracotta, which are paralleled by kindred examples from Baluchistan. Figurines, akin to these, have also been found in large numbers from Iran to the Aegean, notably in Elam, Mesopotamia, Transcaspia, Asia Minor, Syria and Palestine, Cyprus, Crete, the Cyclades, the Balkans, and Egypt. It is probable that they originated from a community of religious ideas shared by the countries where they were found. The generally accepted view is that they represent the Great Mother or Nature Goddess, whose worship, under various names and forms, is still very common in India. The presence of a fertility cult among these people is also represented by figurines of pregnant women and of women with children. Some terracotta figurines may be votive offerings, and others may be toys. The most common figurine is that of a female, wearing a loin cloth, with or without a girdle, much jewellery, and a curious fan-shaped head-dress with two cuplike objects about the region of ears (Pl. VI. 1, 3). Those seated on three-legged chairs or with flowered head-dress (Pl. VI. 4) may be effigies of the Mother Goddess. The male figurines, which were about half the number of the female ones, may also be divided into toys, votaries, and gods. With few exceptions, the male figures are entirely nude. While the female figures are usually standing, the male ones are generally found seated, either with their arms round the knees or in a devotional attitude (Pl. VI. 9), probably pertaining to a hieratic cult.

The male divinities are characterized by a horned head-dress, which symbolized supernatural power. A very important seal showing a god seated on a raised throne in the typical attitude of *yoga* was discovered at Mohenjo-daro (Pl. V. 4). The god is three-faced, wears a pair of horns in the form of a trident meeting in the tall, fan-shaped head-dress, and is bedecked with much jewellery. He seems to be in the *ūrdhvameḍhra (penis erectus)* form. Four animals are shown round the god, the rhinoceros and buffalo on his left, and the elephant and tiger on his right. Below the throne are two regardant deer with their horns turned towards the centre. On the cumulative evidence of three faces, yogic posture, *ūrdhvameḍhra*, trident-shaped head-dress, and the four animals round him, Sir John Marshall has suggested that the figure represents a prototype of the historic Śiva in his Paśupati aspect.[4]

Tree and animal worship seems to have found a place very early in the life of the Indus people. The earliest representation occurs in the form

[4] *Ibid.*, I. pp. 52 ff.

of a pipal leaf, which symbolizes the tree. Slightly later, at Harappā, however, arches of bent boughs of pipal leaf were made to enshrine the epiphany of the tree, while on a seal (Pl. V. 8) from Mohenjo-daro, the deity is shown actually standing within the pipal, and in another, a unicorn head springs on either side from its stem. Among other trees, the acacia is represented enclosed in a platform (Pl. V. 9), or with railing round its base, on a number of sealings from Harappā. A motif of unusual interest on the tiny seals from Harappā is the incense-burner, which later occurs either by itself or is shown being carried by a man, and is regularly found placed below the neck of the unicorn (Pl. V. 1) on numerous seals. Among animals depicted on the seals, the bison, rhinoceros, and tiger are invariably shown feeding from troughs, whereas the elephant and buffalo are sometimes shown feeding from them and sometimes not. Clearly, the troughs bear no relation to domestication, for they are not found placed below the humped and humpless oxen, which may be presumed to have been domesticated. The troughs may therefore symbolize merely food offerings for the propitiation of wild animals. There are representations of animal chimeras containing bijugate, pentajugate, and hexajugate animals, or animals having heads emerging from a common body or nucleus (Pl. V. 14). Then, again, there is a class of composite monsters, therianthropic in form, a combination of the human with the most ferocious and powerful animals, and endowed always with the horns of a bull, probably as a sign of divinity (Pl. V. 10, 11). To the same class of composite figures belongs the semi-human, semi-bovine creature (Pl. V. 12), which bears an undeniable resemblance to the Sumerian Eabani or Enkidu, attacking a horned tiger. On some seals are portrayed the exploits of another therianthropic figure who fights a tiger on either side. He is the counterpart of Gilgamesh, the Mesopotamian hero. A very interesting, though somewhat blurred, sealing from Mohenjo-daro depicts a god seated in the yogic posture on a low throne, and on either side of him is a kneeling suppliant canopied by a snake's hood. This anticipates the *nāga* figures of later Indian mythology.

Among the aniconic objects of worship are the *liṅgas* and *yonis* together with their baetylic forms (Pl. III. 31-33). The *yonis* were pierced with a cylindrical hole in the centre, and were either round or had a wavy outline. Miniatures, mostly of the wavy pattern, have been found in stone, shell, faience, and imitation carnelian. Another sacred symbol, whether it was an object of worship or had only a talismanic value, was the simple cross form or *svastika*.

Briefly, the religion of the Indus people consisted in worshipping the Mother Goddess, the deification of trees and their spirits, certain animal chimeras and therianthropic figures, the prototype of Śiva, the aniconic

phallic symbols, the *svastika*, etc. Of these, the cult of the Mother Goddess and the *svastika* symbol were common throughout the ancient world.

DISPOSAL OF THE DEAD

No cemetery contemporary with the older phases of the city-sites has so far come to light. In Harappā, only two cemeteries have been excavated, of which the earlier one, labelled as R 37, belongs to the Harappā period, while the other, Cemetery H, belongs to the post-Harappan period. The former, lying south of the citadel mound, yielded fifty-seven graves between 1937 and 1946. It contained extended earth-burials with the head generally to the north. With each burial, there was a large quantity of pottery, which is typical of the mature Harappan period, both in style and decoration, and quite distinct from the Cemetery H wares. Besides pottery, many of the burials yielded personal ornaments and toilet-objects as part of the grave-goods. The excavation in 1946 revealed a unique burial here covered with a reed-shroud and wooden coffin, which are familiar features in the Sumerian cemeteries of the third millennium B.C.[5]

Cemetery H, lying between the citadel mound and the Cemetery R 37, belongs to a period when the city-site, as it survives today, had already ceased to exist. Two strata of burials have come to light in it. The upper one consisted of post-exposure burials inhumed in pots, with the exception of babies who were enclosed in embryonic position without previous exposure. In the lower stratum, which follows with a short interval of space, we find earth-burials consigned to graves.

As regards shapes and paintings, the pottery of Cemetery H is entirely different from the secular wares from the city-site. Their paintings show a distinct preference for animal forms, such as the peacock, deer, bull, goat, kites, and fishes, as well as for plants, trees, stars, leaves, etc. Among them are several interesting paintings of a mythological character. Thus on one jar, which is decorated at the shoulder with three flying peacocks alternating with stars, there is seen placed horizontally in the body of each peacock a therianthropic figure, probably representing the ethereal body of the dead being carried to heaven. This peacock motif, often with horns, frequently occurs on the burial-pots (Pl. IVa. 2, 3, 9), and may have some connection with the cult of the dead.

On another jar, the painting is still more elaborate. It consists of two similar groups of figures, showing a bovine animal—probably a bull (or a cow)—with long incurving horns, on either side of a beaked human figure who has secured the bulls by the neck with ropes held by hand and under

[5] *Ancient India* (Archaeological Survey of India), No. 3, pp. 87-88.

the feet, and who also has a bow and arrow in his left hand. In the group on the left, the bull on the man's right is being attacked by a hound which has caught its tail in its mouth. It will also be noticed that the hind quarters of this bull are shown in outline only, as if its entrails are taken out, while the hind quarters of the bull on his left are fully blocked in. Behind the hound are two horned peacocks in flight. Between the two groups of representations is a goat of inordinately large size whose horns are bedecked with eight tridentlike devices, such as those which are seen between the horns of the bulls in the group on the right, and whose hind quarters, like those of the bulls on the right side of the man, are also shown in outline only. The hound in the left side group is reminiscent of Yama's dogs, while the bull and the goat represent animals sacrificed to protect the body of the dead person and also to guide him to the new world. The bull without the entrails seems to anticipate the *anustaraṇī* cow of the Ṛg-Vedic Aryans, and its counterpart, the opposite, the *vaitaraṇī* cow. Similarly, in the *Ṛg-Veda* (X. 16), a funeral hymn addressed to Agni, the deity, at the time of cremating the dead body, is asked only to consume the goat that was slaughtered and laid limb by limb on the corpse, and to carry the dead man to the region of the pious. Several earth-burials of Cemetery H were characterized by the sacrifice of a sheep or goat, which in one case was laid alongside the dead body,[4] and in several others, its members were found lying between the grave-furniture and the dead person.

The bow and arrow in the left hand of the dead person are also mentioned in the *Ṛg-Veda* (X. 18. 9), which refers to their being placed with the dead man. The parallelism with some of the rites, rituals, and beliefs contained in hymns 14, 16, and 18 of the tenth *maṇḍala* of the *Ṛg-Veda* with the paintings depicted on the above pot-burial is sufficiently striking. Cremation and burial were both practised by the Ṛg-Vedic Aryans, and there is an *a priori* possibility on their part of borrowing certain existing beliefs.

Earth-burials of the lower stratum were either entire or fractional and disposed in various directions, their prevailing direction being from north-east to south-west. Generally, dead bodies were laid to rest fully stretched, but quite frequently with legs inflexed. With most burials, but not invariably, some pottery was placed with the dead person and, with but a few exceptions, no jewellery was found on a dead body. Where pots were few, they were generally placed close to the head. These pots have little significant affinity with the typical Harappan ones. It has been suggested

[4] M. S. Vats, *op. cit.*, I. pp. 220-21.

by archaeologists that the people of the Cemetery H culture were responsible for the destruction of the earlier Harappan culture.

AGE AND AUTHORS OF THE INDUS CIVILIZATION

From the foregoing account of the Indus valley culture, it will be seen that it has many features in common with the prehistory of Western Asia—that it bears a close resemblance to the 'Second Pre-diluvian Culture' of Elam and Mesopotamia, which has been re-equated by the Leiden Conference of 1931 with Uruk, Jemdet Nasr, and Early Dynastic periods. This would imply a lively intercourse between the Indus, Elamite, and Mesopotamian sites during the third millennium B.C., when Mohenjo-daro and Harappā were at the height of their prosperity.

The dating of the different phases of the Indus valley civilization, so far excavated, is mainly based on a number of Indian finds in Elam and Mesopotamia, notably at Ur, Kish, Jemdet Nasr, and Tell Asmar. Quite a number of seals, typical of the earlier phase of the Indus valley civilization, have been found at Ur and Kish in the pre-Sargonic strata datable prior to 2350 B.C., as well as at Tell Asmar attributable to the Dynasty of Akkad, i.e. *c.* 2350 B.C., the latter seals being cylinders showing animals which were common in India, but foreign to Mesopotamia. While a few seals of the later phase of the Harappā culture and of the post-Harappan period indicate a date roughly about 1500 B.C., these seals, on account of the scenes depicted on them, are taken to be importations.

Among things which establish early intercourse with Mesopotamia are: the fragments of vases made of Indian 'potstone' found at Al-Ubaid; the identical nature of trefoil pattern with that on certain Sumerian 'Bulls of Heaven' of early date; the toilet-sets comprising a piercer, ear-scoop, and tweezers similar to those found in the First Dynasty cemetery at Ur; the etched carnelian beads resembling those from the pre-Sargonic graves at Kish; the jar-covers consisting of a cup with protruding knob like those from Jemdet Nasr; and the comb-motif painted on the Indus black-on-red pottery, and the step-pattern (which also occurs in shell and faience) in the Indus cities comparable with those of Susa I in Iran. Thus, at present, the excavated levels of Mohenjo-daro fall within a period roughly between 2500-1500 B.C. But it must be remembered that still we have not reached the virgin soil beneath the city of Mohenjo-daro.

The question as to who were the authors of the Harappā culture and whether they were natives of the soil or immigrants into the Indus valley is a difficult one to answer, especially as anthropological evidence on the subject is not only inadequate, but actually meagre. The large skeletal material recovered from the cemeteries R 37 and H at Harappā has not

so far been studied in detail. We have still to depend upon the scanty skeletal remains recovered from the streets of Mohenjo-daro during its last phase, the only ones on which a report has been published so far. It reveals four different racial types, viz. the Australoid,[7] the Mediterranean, the Mongolian branch of the Alpine stock, and the Alpine.[8] The Australoids are represented by three markedly dolicho-cranial skulls which show a close affinity, on the one hand, with certain skulls from Kish, Al-Ubaid, and Ur in Mesopotamia, and, on the other, with skulls from the ancient cemetery at Adittanallur in South India, and with the Veddas of Ceylon. The Mediterranean type, to which about half the total number of skulls belong, is also dolicho-cranial, but with much less brain capacity than that of the Australoids, and can be compared with one skull from Nal (in Baluchistan), one from Kish (Mesopotamia), and two from Anau (Turkestan). Of the Mongolian type, only one mesati-cranial skull has been found, and it agrees with the Naga skull in the Indian Museum. Four examples have been recovered which belong possibly to the Alpine type, and correspond to a similar brachycephalic type from Kish. The foregoing evidence accords well with what might naturally be expected in the Punjab and Sind, which were the meeting ground of several immigrant races.

Owing to the advanced state of civilization with which we are confronted in the Indus city-sites, and considering the early period of its rise and fall, it has sometimes been suggested that the Indus people may have been no other than the Aryans. Even apart from the distinct ethnic type of the Aryans, which has been described by ethnologists as 'generally tall of stature, with fair complexion, dark eyes, plentiful hair on face, long head, narrow and prominent, but not specially long, nose', and which is distinct from the four ethnic types found at Mohenjo-daro, there appears to be a marked dissimilarity in several important facets of life between the Aryans and the authors of the Indus civilization. For instance, whereas the Ṛg-Vedic Aryans lived a pastoral and agricultural life, scattered about in small villages, the people of the Indus valley lived a highly organized life in thickly populated cities with all that is implied by a centralized authority looking after the needs of large populations, and had well-planned houses made of burnt brick, open on two or more sides, with good sanitary arrangements. Though both the Aryans and the Indus people had the bow and arrow, spear, dagger, and axe as common weapons of offence, the former had defensive body-armour, while the latter had nothing more than the shield, though to the weapons of offence they had added maces, both in

[7] Physical anthropologists now prefer the term 'Australoid' in place of 'Proto-Australoid' mentioned by Marshall.

[8] Sir John Marshall, *op. cit.*, I. pp. 107 ff.

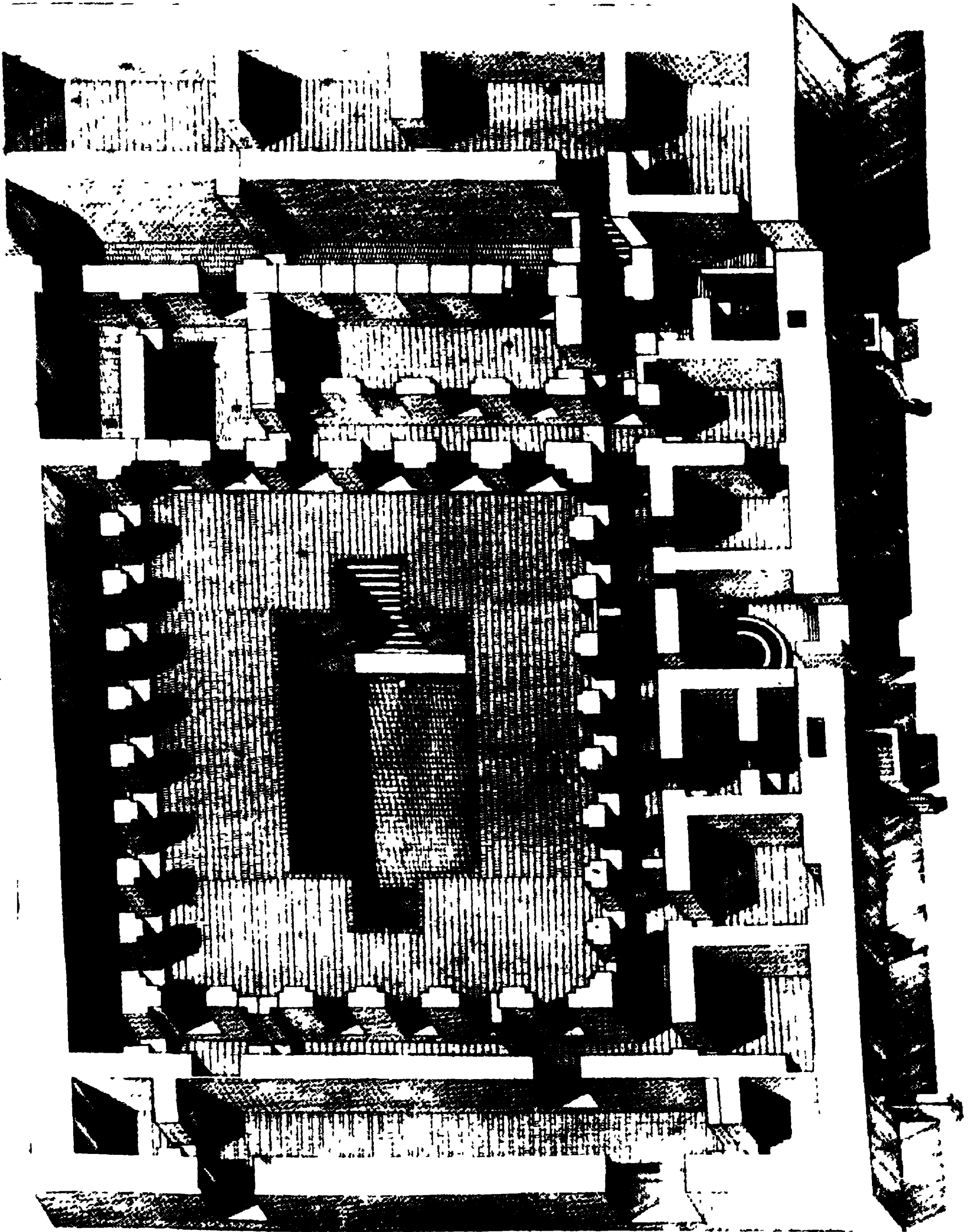
stone and metal. In the Harappā culture, the worship of the Mother Goddess, of phallic emblems of Śiva or his prototype, and of therianthropic and certain animal forms was common, but in the *Ṛg-Veda*, there does not appear to be any direct evidence of iconic worship. The Aryans were probably not given so much to seafaring, while the Indus people are known to have had regular intercourse by sea with distant places in the Indian Ocean, Persian Gulf, and probably beyond, and representations of boats are also found depicted on their seals.

It is notorious that the cow, which was prized as wealth and considered *aghnyā* by the Ṛg-Vedic Aryans, and the horse, which played an important part in their life, do not find a place among the animals depicted in the Indus valley sites, the place of the cow being taken by the bull, while of the horse no definite trace is found. The elephant, which is so faithfully depicted in the Indus valley, and on account of its prowess was given food-offerings, along with the tiger, rhinoceros, and bison, with whom it was combined into composite monsters, which play a distinct rôle in the mythology of the Indus people, is referred to in the *Ṛg-Veda* by the curious name of *mṛga-hastin*, or an animal with a trunk, implying a new acquaintance with the animal.

For these reasons, it is likely that the Indus people were quite different from the Ṛg-Vedic Aryans. On the contrary, from our present-day knowledge about the Harappan and post-Harappan sites, it seems probable that the destruction of the Harappā civilization was brought about by the Aryan invaders, whose date of entry into India has been roughly assigned to 1500 B.C. In a recent paper, Robert Heine-Geldern,[9] after comparing some of the objects recovered from later Harappan levels and of post-Harappan period with similar objects unearthed at some Iranian sites, confirms the above view, only shifting the date of the Aryan invasion to between 1200 and 1000 B.C., which seems to be the upper limit of the Harappā civilization.

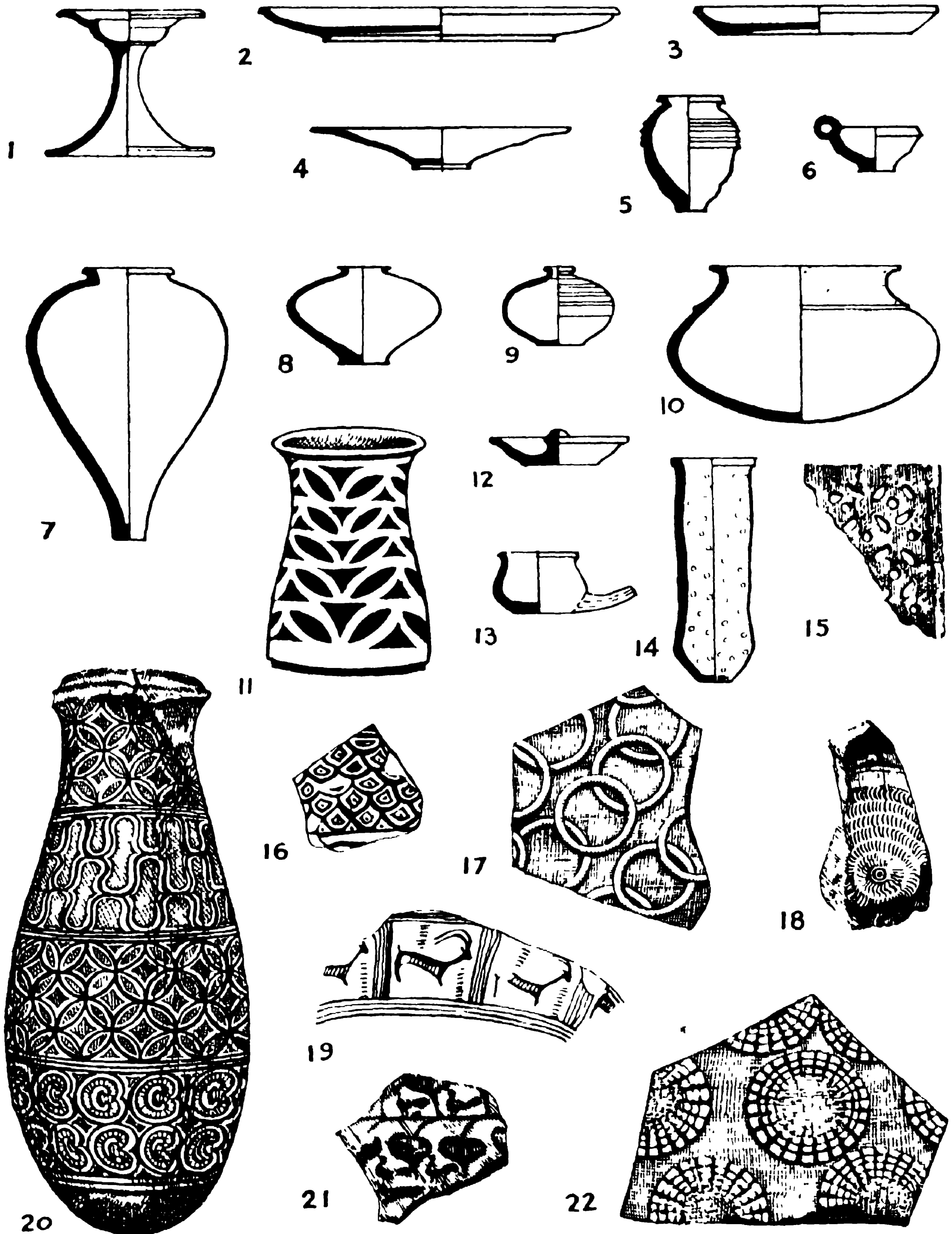
[9] 'The Coming of the Aryans and the End of the Harappā Civilization', *Man* (October 1956), pp. 136-40.

PLATE I



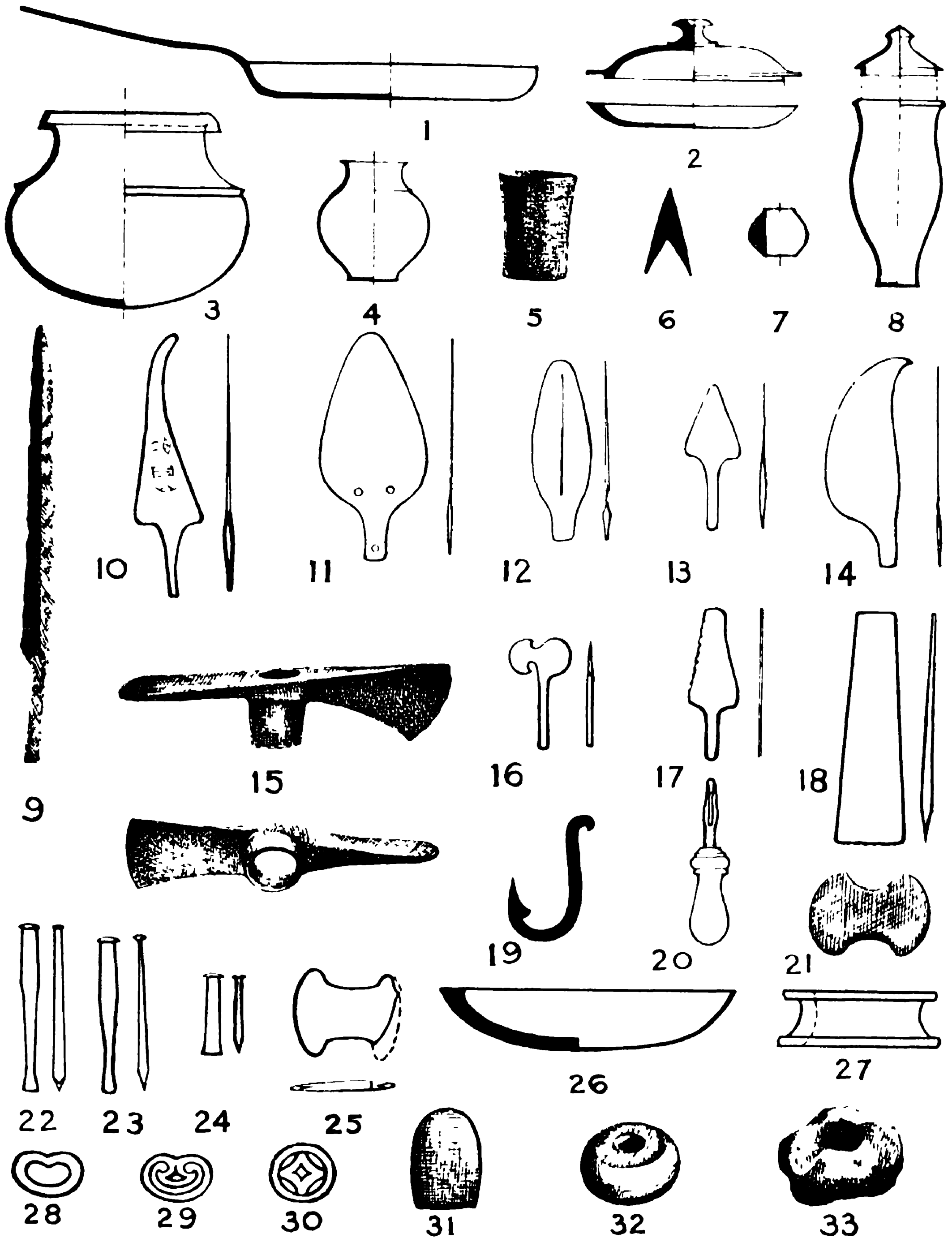
THE GREAT BATH, MOHENJO-DARO
Copyright Archaeological Survey of India

PLATE II



POTTERY

PLATE III



METAL UTENSILS, WEAPONS AND IMPLEMENTS, AND CULT OBJECTS

PLATE IV



POTTERY TYPES FROM HARAPPA CEMETERY H

PLATE V



1



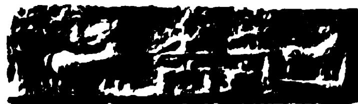
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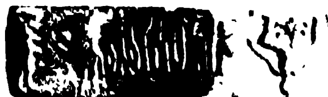


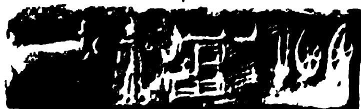
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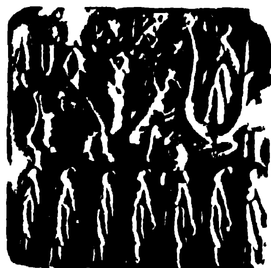
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14

SEALS

PLATE VI





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FIGURINES, TOYS AND OTHER OBJECTS

PLATE VII



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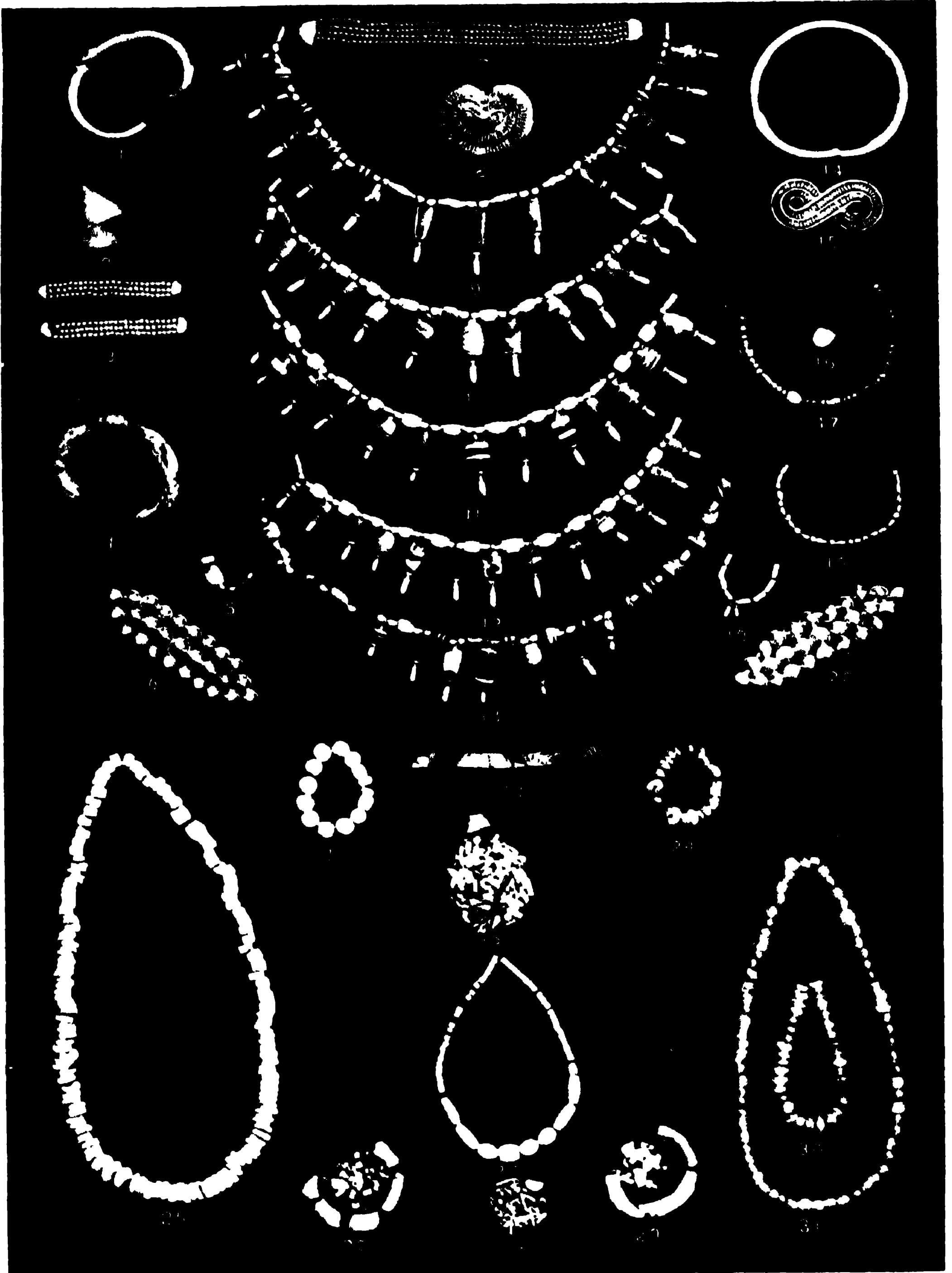


3



4

STATUARY



JEWELLERY

8

THE ORIGIN OF THE INDO-ARYANS

INDIA, vast in size and bounded off from the outer world by the seemingly impenetrable mountain ranges constituting her northern boundary, naturally developed from early times the notion that she is a world by herself, unsullied by extraneous contaminations. That the Indian civilization has roots far beyond the precincts of Brahmāvarta or Āryāvarta, our forefathers would have never believed, for there is not a single passage in the vast Vedic literature to suggest clearly that Aryan India had ever any connection with the world outside. Yet it is certain that the Aryans came to India from outside. The very language used by our Indo-Aryan forefathers betrays this fact.

CRITERION OF ARYANISM

It must not be forgotten that the term 'Aryan' primarily denotes a linguistic concept. Max Müller, who is mainly responsible for the vogue of this term, left no doubt on this score. He declared: 'Aryan, in scientific language, is utterly inapplicable to race. It means language and nothing but language.'[1] But the scholarly world, not entirely without reason, never gave its full assent to this rigid formulation of the theory by Max Müller. If language is the sole criterion, then American Negroes, too, would be entitled to call themselves Aryan, since they speak no other language than the American form of English, which is one of the most important Aryan languages of the present day. Should the criterion of language then be given up as altogether inadequate as a means by which to solve the Aryan problem? True, there are men like Penka, who declared language to be 'the organic product of an organism subject to organic laws'.[2] But Penka himself and his followers based their theory of the Scandinavian home of the Aryans mainly on anthropological grounds, instead of relying on language.

The view-points represented by Penka and Müller are apparently wholly irreconcilable, for, as the criterion of Aryanism, the former holds up the physical characteristics of the Scandinavians; and the latter, the characteristics of a certain number of languages (including Scandinavian) spoken in Asia and Europe. But the position is not actually so hopeless as it may seem. In principle, the two theories can be reconciled, though

[1] Max Müller, *Collected Works* (New Impression, 1898), X (*The Home of the Aryas*). p. 90.
[2] *Origines Aricae*, p. 6.

the facts on which their protagonists have striven to found them may prove to be, as they really do, insufficient, irrelevant, and therefore undependable. Against Penka, it can truly be urged that he has, as if by intuition, perceived that the designation 'Aryan' can be applied only to those who are endowed with Scandinavian physical characteristics, for he adduces nothing that may be called proof in support of his assumption. Apparently, Penka and his followers instinctively assumed the Germans to be the purest descendants of the ancient Indo-Europeans, and they were right in so far as Scandinavia is the original Germanic home, as is generally conceded today. But in claiming for the original Germanic home the honour of having been the cradle-land of the Indo-Europeans, they made a great error of judgement.

On the other hand, it is useless to point to examples of the Negroes and the like and to repeat *ad nauseam* that language is totally unconnected with race. The question here is of *origins*. In origin, every language, of which the whole history is known, was confined within a narrow social group, as is evidenced by Bengali, English, Latin, etc., and it need not have been otherwise with the original Indo-European language. In fact, every language, at the beginning, must have been the property of a particular race, though that is not to say that more than one language could not have originated within the same race. But once originated, language is apt to behave like a transferable commodity, and may even desert its originators. The Gypsy language is of Indian origin, but can it be maintained that Indian blood is flowing in the veins of the Hungarian Gypsies?

It is obvious that, in attempting to solve the Aryan problem, it is permissible, nay imperative, to enlist the services both of linguistics and ethnology. The former would show us the extent of the far-flung empire of Aryan speech, and the latter would render valuable service in our efforts to discover the centre from which this speech-form, along with rudiments of the culture of which it was the vehicle, assuming new aspects everywhere and in every age, and overwhelming rivals through sheer adaptability, established permanent sway over the greater part of Eurasia at an epoch long before the dawn of history.

SEARCH FOR OLDEST COMMON FORM

It is well to remember here that, so far as linguistic evidence is concerned, our interest lies wholly in the oldest forms attainable of the Indo-European languages, for the points of agreement between them, from which their common origin can be inferred, dwindle in number as we come down from ancient to modern times. From a comparative study of, say, modern Irish, modern Swedish, modern Armenian, and modern Bengali,

it is not possible to infer their common origin.[3] But it is quite a different matter if we have before us their ancient forms, though even then it is far from simple to detect their genetic relation. Even a Grimm or a Rask would not be able to discover any particular affinity between modern Bengali and modern Persian, but the oldest forms of these two languages, appearing in the Veda and the Avesta, are so much alike that even a novice will see at once that they are but dialects of the same speech-form. Variability is the constant characteristic of all living idioms. It may even prove fatal to the identity of a language, for there are instances of mixed languages like modern Albanian and ancient Hittite, the Indo-European character of which, in the strict sense of the term, is largely a matter of opinion. The example of Hittite shows that we cannot search too far back into the misty past of what are popularly known as Aryan languages.[4]

It is curious to note, however, that the highly civilized Indo-European-speaking peoples of old, like the Greeks and the Persians of the Achaemenian age, although in constant contact with each other, either in peace or in war, never suspected that their national languages were genetically related to each other, in spite of the fact that the resemblance between ancient Greek and ancient Persian was far greater than between their present-day descendants. The inordinate vanity of the Greeks, in whose eyes the Persians, however powerful and civilized, were just barbarians, marred the unique opportunity they had of anticipating Sir William Jones, the founder of the science of comparative philology.

Jones, however, was not the first to detect the similarity between the Indo-European languages of India and Europe. Ever since the dawn of the Renaissance in Europe, which *inter alia* undermined, and finally destroyed, the rule of Latin over the Continent, people had learnt to take interest also in other languages, including Sanskrit. A comparative grammar of Sanskrit had even been published in 1767 by the missionary P. Coeurdoux, which won the admiration of Max Müller. But he, too, failed to detect the genetic relation between the languages he was comparing. Like other authors before and after him, he was firmly convinced that the confusion of languages referred to in the Bible, in connection with the story of the Tower of Babel, was an historical event, and the points of similarity between Sanskrit, Latin, etc. were, in his opinion, due to that confusion. Jones, too, made mistakes comparable in magnitude to those of Coeurdoux, but it was he who, in his address of 1786 to the Asiatic Society of Bengal, suggested the true

[3] Meillet, *Scientia* (1914), XV. p. 418. Even between modern French and modern English, no genetic relation can be detected without a comparative study of their ancient forms according to the same author (*ibid.*, p. 416).

[4] In scientific language, 'Aryan' means 'Indo-Iranian'. In the present article, however, the term has been used in its popular sense, namely, 'Indo-European'.

solution. With his characteristic daring, he declared the striking similarity between Sanskrit, on the one hand, and Greek, Latin, etc., on the other, to be due to descent from a common parent language, and therewith laid the foundation of the science of comparative philology, which is our chief means of solving the Aryan problem.

VASTNESS OF AREA AND MANNER OF EXPANSION

It was a great idea that Jones had launched forth, and it immediately caught on. It was intoxicating to think that the forefathers of Indians and Englishmen must have been living together and speaking the same language sometime, somewhere, in the past, for how else can the common parentage of their languages be explained? In the first flush of enthusiasm, it was forgotten that a language may spread also through social contact far from its original speakers, and this was the main cause of the importation of race questions into the highly complex Aryan problem.

If Indo-European dialects had been found to reign over disconnected areas like Iceland, Japan, and Australia, then, of course, the only hypothesis acceptable would have been that of actual invasion of these areas by separate bodies of Aryans. But a very important, though often ignored, fact about the Indo-European languages is that, before they began to be exported to the continents of America and Australia at the close of the Middle Ages, they were covering a great continuous area stretching from India to Spain, if the British Isles, Iceland, and a few other detached areas off the coast are left out of consideration. To explain the Polynesian character of the native dialect of Madagascar, we have to assume that a body of Polynesians must have been physically present there. But a similar assumption would be absurd in the case of the vast Indo-European-speaking area of Eurasia.

The original group among which the Indo-European speech-form was born could not but have been a small one, since no primitive society with a common culture and language could afford to grant the privilege of its membership to a large number of individuals, on account of the lack of means of intercommunication. It is quite clear that such a small social group as that of the primitive Indo-Europeans was unable to send out expeditions to every part of Europe, and a large portion of Asia, especially as the conveyers of Aryan speech and culture must have met with resistance, at every step, from the taboo-ridden non-Aryans they encountered in the course of their progress. Yet the amazing fact is there—the fact that, already in prehistoric times, a vast area, vaster than that of any empire the world has ever seen, had come under the influence of a small social group of primitive Aryans.

MODERN PARALLELS

But, however amazing the expansion of primitive Aryanism may seem, it is not without parallels within the historical period. Let us only think of the expansion of Christianity and Islam. It was not the Jews of Palestine, among whom Jesus was born, who converted England to Christianity. It was the Romans, the implacable enemies of the Jews, who started Christianizing England, after sustaining cultural defeat at the hands of the Jews. Nor was it the Muslims of Mecca who conquered Spain. The Berbers, the erstwhile enemies and later staunch protagonists of Islam, did it. It need not have been otherwise with the expansion of Aryanism in prehistoric Eurasia. It is quite reasonable to suppose—and no other theory can be imagined—that a small body of primitive Indo-Europeans radiated cultural and linguistic influence from their original home, which in ever new waves, in the course of ages, overwhelmed the vast area over which at the present day Indo-European dialects are spoken.

A great advantage of this theory is that the race-question under it loses the aspect of a formidable problem and receives its natural solution. It cannot, and need not, be denied that even under this theory the expansion of Aryanism remains a freak of nature, but history has witnessed several such freaks. Only at the initial stage did the citizens of Rome fight for Roman expansion. After that initial stage, the brunt of the Roman wars of expansion was borne by foreign converts to Latin culture. A handful of non-Hellenic Macedonians were responsible for the spread of Greek language and culture in Asia, and the vast hordes of the Achaemenian monarchs were composed wholly of foreigners recruited from conquered territories. It is but fair to concede to prehistoric times the possibility of what happened within the historical age, and admit that the original Indo-European-speaking people were a small community with a common culture inhabiting a not too large area.

THE EXPANDING AREA THEORY

Before this primitive community broke up into different tribes, which for some reason or other found it impossible to live together, it must have grown enormously in size and spread over a vastly larger territory. This fact is important, for it shows that the original home of the Indo-Europeans was not always a small limited area, but an ever-expanding one. Within this ever-expanding area, Indo-European speech certainly reigned supreme, but it would be futile to assert that the people inhabiting this unbounded original home were racially homogeneous, unless it is assumed that the area over which the Aryan nucleus expanded was wholly uninhabited. The race-question thus becomes wholly irrelevant as soon as we assume—as we

must do—that, even before the final dispersal of the tribes, the original Indo-European home had been expanding, the people losing in homogeneity what they gained in territory.

The theory of an expanding original home solves also another problem. Expansion takes time, and time brings change. The original Indo-European dialect therefore must have undergone change, even before the final dispersal, *pari passu* with the expansion of the original home. We shall see below that the hypothesis of a changing and evolving basic Indo-European dialect is essential and inescapable.

EVIDENCE OF GUTTURALS

We have now established that the original Indo-European home must have been continually expanding even before the final dispersal of the tribes—a fact that gives the quietus to the disturbing race problem. But the dispersal of all the tribes need not have taken place at the same time. Indeed, there is enough evidence to prove that this was not the case. The Hittite language, for instance, clearly suggests that the Proto-Hittites had separated from the main body of the primitive Indo-Europeans at a time when the palatals had not yet been originated in the basic language through the partial spirantization of the velars. Moreover, there is reason to believe that the whole gamut of *Satem*-dialects* was of comparatively later origin.

Modern linguistics justly views with increasing scepticism the theory of three series of gutturals in the basic Indo-European language, because no known dialect shows clear trace of all the three. It is far better to assume that the labio-velars, through gradual attenuation of the labial element, attained by stages the aspect of pure velars and palatals. The advantage of accepting this theory, even in the absence of direct knowledge of that stage of Indo-European at which the labio-velars were the only gutturals in it, is quite obvious ; for it frees Indo-European linguistics from the embarrassing necessity of accepting the theory of simultaneous existence of all the three series of gutturals in the basic idiom. Simultaneous existence of labio-velars and velars is unexceptionable, since all the *Centum*-languages prove it. Similarly, all the *Satem*-languages prove that the assumption of simultaneous

* The Indo-European languages are divided into two main groups on the basis of the development of the palatal sound K of the parent Indo-European speech, which is developed in one group into the velar or a K-sound and in the other into a sibilant or a Ś or S sound. These two divisions have been named respectively *Centum* and *Satem* after the typical word for 'hundred' illustrating this, which is found in all Indo-European languages. The *Centum* group comprises (1) Keltic ; (2) Germanic (Teutonic) ; (3) Italic ; (4) Greek (Hellenic) ; (5) Hittite ; and (6) Tokharian ; while the *Satem* group consists of (1) Albanian ; (2-3) Letto-Slavic, i.e. Lettic, and Slavic ; (4) Armenian ; and (5-6) Indo-Iranian (Aryan), i.e. Iranian, and Indian (Sanskritic).

existence of velars and palatals is possible. But as soon as we accept the theory of the simultaneous existence of all the three series of gutturals, the pure velars, by all criteria the most obvious of the gutturals, almost completely vanish from the picture of Indo-European phonetics. Indeed, from this point of view, as is well known, only one equation speaks unequivocally for the existence of pure velars in the original Indo-European, and that is: Sanskrit, *kravis* = Greek, *kreas*.

BRANCHING OFF AT DIFFERENT TIMES

The evidence of the gutturals therefore does suggest that the original Indo-European, even before the final dispersal of the tribes, was by no means a rigid and unchanging idiom. It was as much a changing idiom as all the daughter dialects are, and the historical dialects must have branched off from it at different dates. That is to say, the Indo-European of the day when Hittite branched off from it was not the same as that Indo-European from which Proto-Greek branched off, and similarly, that form of Indo-European which gave birth to Proto-Greek cannot claim fatherhood of Sanskrit, a *Satem*-dialect with a later spirantized guttural. But the branching off of a dialect does not necessarily mean separation of the tribe speaking that dialect from the main body of Indo-Europeans. There is every reason to believe that the Proto-Indians, although linguistically characterized at a later date than the speakers of *Centum*-dialects were probably among the first to separate from the parent body, as Brandenstein has shown.

It is only under such a hypothesis—the hypothesis of an ever-changing and evolving *basic* Indo-European—that there is any possibility of genetically relating all the Indo-European dialects with one another. For it is obvious that a static and unchanging basic Indo-European would not be able to account for the birth of all the daughter dialects and also for their irreconcilable distinguishing features. The *same* basic Indo-European cannot explain, for example, the existence of both *bh*-endings and *m*-endings of the nominal flexion. It is absolutely futile to try to explain away this discrepancy as resulting from regional peculiarities, for in each camp we have both eastern and western dialects: *bh*-endings are attached or affixed not only by *Centum*-dialects like Greek and Latin, but also by *Satem*-dialects like Sanskrit and Iranian, while *m*-endings are shared both by Germanic and Slavic, the former a *Centum*- and the latter a *Satem*-dialect. The theory of regional peculiarity therefore is inadequate, and that not only in the case of the nominal endings just mentioned. But, if the theory of regional variation fails, what else but difference in time of origin is there that can be regarded as the cause of this discrepancy?

PROBABLE CRADLE-LAND

After this clarification of the preliminary concepts, we are now perhaps in a position to tackle the central problem of the probable original home of the Indo-Europeans. And let us first consider the claims of India in this respect.

India's claim to be regarded as the cradle-land of the Indo-Europeans is based on the one and only argument that the most ancient literature in an Indo-European language is to be found in India. It is altogether a different question, however, if the Vedic language is the oldest known Indo-European language. Under normal circumstances, the age of a language can be approximately determined if a definite date can be ascribed to any point in its known history. From a knowledge of modern English alone, a student of languages can easily hazard the statement that Chaucer could not have lived so early as A.D. 1000. For he knows not only that the language is continually changing, but also its approximate *rate of change*. The language of Bernard Shaw is evidently not that of Byron, and Byron's language differs as distinctly from that of Samuel Johnson. The rate of change revealed by a comparison of the idioms emanating from the pens of these three writers does suggest an approximate date for Shakespeare's English, and the latter, in its turn, an approximate date for Chaucer's. It has to be borne in mind, however, that this mode of computing the approximate dates of particular forms of a language is applicable only within comparatively short periods of its history. It would certainly be absurd to try to infer the age of a particular phase of Latin from the rate of change of modern French. On the other hand, attempts to date the phases of Spanish in the light of the rates of change observed in the cognate dialects, viz. Italian, French, and Portuguese, would be methodologically quite correct.

ṚG-VEDIC LANGUAGE

Thus there are two ways of assessing the age of an old language: one by computing the dates of its own later forms, and the other from the datable aspects of its sister dialects. Sanskrit affords scope for applying both these means of assessing the date of a changing idiom. It is now generally admitted by all that Pāṇini lived about 400 B.C., and the language described by Pāṇini is known to us in every detail: it is essentially a literary language from which the author tried to exclude extreme Vedisms, on the one hand, and vulgar *bhāṣā*-forms, on the other. Now, the difference between Pāṇini's language and the language of the *Ṛg-Veda* is certainly not greater than that between, say, the forms of English used by Chaucer and Bernard Shaw. The conclusion is justified therefore that, whatever the

date of the contents of the *Ṛg-Veda*, its language can by no means be dated much earlier than 1000 B.C.

This approximate date is corroborated by the result derived from the argument based on analogy. It is well known that the language of the Avestan *Gāthās* composed by Zarathushtra and his immediate disciples so closely resembles the language of the *Ṛg-Veda* that the two may truly be regarded as dialects of the same language, and therefore must be of approximately the same age. The approximate date of the language of the *Gāthās* can be determined on the basis of its resemblance to the language of the Old Persian inscriptions of the sixth century B.C., and, in fact, the resemblance is such that a distance of more than three or four centuries between them cannot be contemplated. The whole thing is not a little like trying to ascertain the age of canonical Pāli from the language of the Aśokan inscriptions. Linguistically, the *Gāthās* have therefore to be assigned to about 1000 B.C., irrespective of what the Parsi tradition may have to say about the date of the prophet. Since, as mentioned above, the *Ṛg-Veda* and the Avestan *Gāthās* are linguistically contemporaneous, we get also, in this way, a date of about 1000 B.C. for the language of the *Ṛg-Veda*.

EARLIER CULTURAL HISTORY

It is of course obvious that an Aryan-speaking population, who in course of time produced the *Ṛg-Veda* (and other works later), was in India long before 1000 B.C. We say 'long before', because a work like the *Ṛg-Veda* is not the first, but the final result of a long, uninterrupted, and homogeneous cultural life. Though nothing but a collection of hymns to the gods composed by several priestly families, the *Ṛg-Veda* clearly reflects the picture of a highly complex society in the full blaze of civilization, ruled by constantly warring petty princes, but dominated most potently by the priestly classes, through whose prayers the gods were persuaded to confer favours on the devout Aryans. Even literary culture had achieved a high degree of perfection already in the Ṛg-Vedic age, and had entered a stage that in modern parlance would be called 'decadent', characterized as it is by a stolid adherence to convention. But it is in religion and cult that this spirit of decadence is most evident. The hymns to the gods, with few exceptions, are strangely stereotyped, and are mere adjuncts to ritual, which, in the eyes of the authors, was apparently more powerful than the gods themselves, whom it could compel to do the bidding of the sacrificers. It is quite clear that the Ṛg-Vedic culture, known to us from a work composed in a language of about 1000 B.C., had a long history behind it, buried in the past, of which there is no record. Are we to assume therefore that the

Indo-Aryans who built up the imposing structure of Ṛg-Vedic civilization and culture were autochthonous in India?

This question has, however, to be answered in the negative. To suggest that Indo-Aryan culture was autochthonous in India is to suggest that India was the original home of the Aryans; but it is obvious that, if such was really the case, the Aryans would have first of all Aryanized the whole of India before venturing abroad over the forbidding frontiers. Even today, half of India is non-Aryan in speech, and even its Aryanized parts are dotted with non-Aryan speech-pockets. Indeed, from the view-point of Aryanism, India makes a poor show against Europe which is solidly Aryan in speech, barring the Basques in the west and the Finno-Ugrians in the east.

Yet, this is no compelling argument against India's claim to be regarded as the cradle-land of the Aryans. No doubt, the distribution of the Indo-European dialects over Eurasia renders highly infelicitous a theory of Indian cradle-land of the Aryans. But have we not seen that history is full of freaks? An Indian home may seem improbable enough, but is there really any argument that would render it absolutely impossible? This question, we think, should be answered in the positive.

EVIDENCE OF MOHENJO-DARO

The *Ṛg-Veda*, by far the most important source of information about the ancient Indo-Aryans, clearly shows that, in the earliest period, the Aryans in India were confined within the north-western corner of the sub-continent, including the area where the remains of the Mohenjo-daro culture have been discovered. If this Mohenjo-daro culture could be pronounced to be of Aryan inspiration, then, in spite of everything, India could have claimed to be the Indo-European cradle-land, for nowhere in the world is there any trace of an Indo-European culture that is so old as the culture of Mohenjo-daro, which, on archaeological grounds, has been assigned to about 2500 B.C.[5] But, to all appearance, the Mohenjo-daro culture is of non-Aryan inspiration. A full discussion of this great problem is not possible here, nor is it necessary. For so long as the Mohenjo-daro script is not deciphered, evaluation, however meticulous, of the archaeological finds, is bound to remain dubious. But all that we can be tolerably sure of is distinctly suggestive of a non-Aryan origin of the Mohenjo-daro culture. Its Sumerian affinity has often been emphasized by the archaeologists. And, in fact, the only thing that may seem to favour a theory of an Aryan character of the Mohenjo-daro civilization is the cult of Śiva-Paśupati, which,

[5] Frankfort, Introductory article in *Annual Bibliography of Indian Archaeology for the Year 1932*.

to all appearance, was popular among the Mohenjo-daro people. But a close inspection of the Paśupati cult, as it appears in the Vedic literature, will quickly disabuse us of the idea, and show that it was a foreign cult accepted grudgingly by the Aryans within their religion.

The position of Paśupati or Rudra is rather strange in Vedic religion. In the ritual texts, all the other gods are asked to come to the place of sacrifice, but Rudra and his followers (the Rudriyas) are asked to go away! The very name of Rudra was taboo. In the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, Rudra has been referred to as 'this god', or 'the god whose name contains the word *bhūta* or *paśu*' (i.e. Bhūtapati, Paśupati). The name of Rudra occurring in the *Ṛg-Veda* (II.3.1) was purposely mispronounced as 'Rudriya' in the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* (III.3.9-10), and it even appears that a *mantra* beginning with '*Abhi naḥ*' (towards us) was altered so as not to provide a pretext to Rudra to rush to the place of sacrifice (*Ibid.*, III.3.10).

Why is there this attitude of aversion towards Rudra, if, like Indra, Varuṇa, and others, he was really a god of the Aryans? Why is it that the offerings to Rudra were deposited at forbidding places,[6] while those to the other gods were sacrificed into the fire? There are many other striking details about Rudra in the ancient ritual texts which definitely prove that, to the Vedic Aryans, he was a foreign deity—exactly like the *theoi apopompaioi* of Greece, the gods of aversion, borrowed by the Aryan Hellenes from their non-Aryan predecessors in the land.[7]

Now, if the native deity of the Mohenjo-daro people appears as a foreign god to the Vedic Aryans, does it not prove that the Mohenjo-daro people were not Aryans? And what does it suggest, if it is found that about 2500 B.C. the region which in the Ṛg-Vedic age was the habitat of the Indo-Aryans was occupied by a non-Aryan people? Does it not suggest that the Aryans in India were foreign intruders who broke into the subcontinent at some date posterior to that of the Mohenjo-daro culture? But the Mohenjo-daro culture continued to flourish for several centuries even after 2500 B.C.; and for the *beginning* of the Vedic culture, which, as we have seen, was in full bloom as a distinct product of the Indian soil already long before 1000 B.C., it is impossible to contemplate any date later than 1500 B.C. The Aryan invasion of India, we must therefore assume, should have taken place, doubtless as a continuous action spreading over decades, sometime between 2000 and 1500 B.C. But let us not forget that about 1500 B.C. the Indo-Aryan language could not yet have assumed the form in which it appears to us today in the *Ṛg-Veda*.

[6] Keith, *The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads* (Harvard Oriental Series, XXXI), p. 145.

[7] Nilsson, *Greek Religion*, p. 204; Jane Ellen Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion* (Second Edition), pp. 8 ff.

THE HITTITE-MITANNI LINK

In fact, a language which may equally be called Proto-Indo-Aryan or Proto-Iranian makes its appearance about 1500 B.C. far away both from India and Iran! Excavations at El-Amarna in Egypt have revealed the amazing fact that, about the middle of the second millennium B.C., princelings with typical Indo-Iranian names (i.e. names in a language which later branched off into Iranian and Indo-Aryan) were ruling in the region of Syria. The names are Artamanya, Arzawiya, Yasdata, Suttarna, etc.,[8] which strikingly suggest the picture of the basic Indo-Iranian. About the same time, northern Mesopotamia, inhabited by the Mitanni, was ruled by a people who called themselves Maryanni. The language of this people, too, was distinctly a form of archaic Indo-Iranian, for the numerals in their language, as revealed by the State archives of the Hittite empire discovered at Boghaz-keui in Turkey, are distinctly Indo-Iranian in type, viz. *aika, tera, panza, satta*, etc.[9] But a far more valuable treasure yielded by the same State archives is the copy of a peace treaty of about 1400 B.C., between the Hittites and the Maryanni rulers of the Mitanni, in which the names of the Vedic gods Indra, Varuṇa, and the Nāsatyas have been invoked, evidently from the side of the latter.[10] Should we therefore conclude, as many scholars have done, that, about the middle of the second millennium B.C., the forefathers of the Indo-Aryans were still in Western Asia on their way to India from a European home? This is hardly possible, for we have already seen that the Aryans must have reached India long before that date. We are, in fact, faced with the problem of practically simultaneous emergence of Indo-Iranian-speaking tribes in Syria, Mesopotamia, and India. Evidently, the original Indo-Iranian home—not to be confused with the Indo-European cradle-land—lay somewhere between India and Syria.

In the light of these modern discoveries, the Iranian tradition about the Aryan cradle-land (*Airiyānam vaējo*), distinctly located in the Avesta in 'the vast plains of the Oxus and Jaxartes',[11] receives a novel significance. It is from this area that the forefathers of the undivided Indo-Iranians spread westward into Syria and eastward into India, at a date sufficiently early to allow for the establishment of distinctive Aryan cultures in these two regions, centuries before the middle of the second millennium B.C. Hence the conclusion seems obvious that the undivided Indo-Iranians should have reached *their* original home in the Oxus region at the latest about 2000 B.C. How

[8] For a full discussion of these names, see Mironov, *Acta Orientalia*, XI. pp. 140 ff.; Keith, *Woolner Commemoration Volume*, pp. 137 ff.

[9] *The Cambridge Ancient History*, II. p. 13.

[10] Forrer, Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft (1922), p. 254.

[11] Herzfeld, *Iran in the Ancient East* (1941), p. 190.

important this date is for the reconstruction of the early history of the Indo-European tribes, we shall see immediately below.

Hittite, as is well known, is the oldest of the Indo-European languages of which we have any direct evidence. It is so archaic that some Hittite scholars, particularly Sturtevant, are inclined to believe that it should be regarded as standing in a sisterly relation to the original Indo-European, and not as an offspring of it like all the other dialects. But that was in the days when nobody had thought of a continually changing and evolving basic Indo-European.[12] From the present-day standpoint of comparative philology, however, Hittite may easily get admission into the society of Indo-European dialects with the dignity of an eldest sister. Hittite emerges into the light of history in distant Cappadocia in North Turkey, sometime before 1900 B.C., for there are later copies of early Hittite inscriptions which go back to approximately that date.[13] Though Cappadocia was in the occupation of the Hittites so early, yet it cannot be regarded as their original home. For the very region where the Hittite empire arose was previously, for many centuries, in the hands of the Assyrians, and the whole country was covered with Assyrian trade-settlements.[14] But these trade-settlements suddenly came to an end about 1950 B.C.,[15] evidently because of invasion by the Hittites, whose earliest inscriptions, as mentioned above, can be dated about 1900 B.C.

Thus we see that about the same date, viz. 2000 B.C., the Hittites in the west occupied Cappadocia, and the undivided Indo-Iranians took possession of the plains of the Oxus. These two being the oldest Indo-European tribes known to us, it is legitimate to conclude that the original Indo-European home was equidistant from the Oxus and Cappadocia. It is clear therefore that the honour of being regarded as the cradle-land of the primitive Indo-Europeans can be granted neither to India, nor to Central Europe.

TOCHARIAN

Of the various theories about an European original home of the Aryans, the one that most deserves respectful consideration is Hirt's, who, before the discovery of Hittite and Tocharian, suggested that the original homeland of the Indo-Europeans should have stretched on both sides of the Vistula, since, of the dialects known to him, those to the east of that river are all *Satem*-dialects and those to the west of it are *Centum*-dialects, and

[12] This point, be it noted here, has been fully established by Benveniste in his epoch-making article on Tocharian in *Hirt-Festschrift*, II.

[13] Sturtevant, *A Comparative Grammar of the Hittite Language*, p. 29.

[14] However strange it may sound, Assyrian history must, at the present day, begin with Cappadocia instead of Assyria!

[15] Götze, *Kulturgeschichte des Alten Orients* (dritter Abschnitt, erste Lieferung, 1933), p. 76.

the author very ingeniously further suggested that the river itself was probably the cause of the *Satem-Centum* dialect-split.[16] But such a facile solution is no longer acceptable today, since we have now to the east of the Vistula, in Hittite and Tocharian, two dialects, none of which shows a spirantized palatal, the inalienable characteristic of the *Satem*-dialects.

But that is not to say that Tocharian may straightway be taken as a *Centum*-dialect. For though late attested, Tocharian shows such deep-rooted archaic features that it is best to regard it as forming a group with Hittite that branched off from the parent Indo-European dialect, at a time when palatals in the latter had not yet been originated at all.[17] After a detailed discussion of Tocharian, Benveniste comes to the conclusion that 'Tocharian is an ancient member of a prehistoric group (to which perhaps Hittite too belongs), which bordered on the one hand on Baltic and Slavic and on the other on Greek, Armenian, and Thraco-Phrygian',[18] and as the original home of the Proto-Tocharians, he mentions the area between the Dnieper and the Urals.[19] Tocharian therefore gives us the second pointer to the Indo-European original home (the first pointer, as we know already, is its equi-distance from Cappadocia and the region of the Oxus).

LITHUANIAN SPEECH-AREA

The third pointer is supplied by the language of Lithuania. Lithuanian is a distinctly characterized *Satem*-dialect, and therefore must have been *in origin* later than Hittite and Tocharian, which, as we have tried to show above, should have separated from the basic Indo-European even before the emergence of the palatals. The oldest form of Lithuanian known to us dates only from the fifteenth century A.D. Yet, it so closely resembles the reconstructed Indo-European, that even Vedic Sanskrit in some respects looks modern by its side. There is only one way to explain these two apparently mutually exclusive qualities of Lithuanian—its *Satem*-character and its extremely archaic phonology and morphology: We have to assume that more than any other dialect, *Satem* or *Centum*, Lithuanian managed to keep close to the land of its origin and thus to avoid the wear and tear inevitable in movements to distant regions. Thus the historically known Lithuanian speech-area could not have been far removed from the Indo-European cradle-land. And it is important to remember in this connection that this area originally extended much further to the east than its present boundary suggests. Nearness to the original Lithuanian speech-area is therefore our third pointer to the Indo-European cradle-land.

[16] Hermann Hirt, *Die Indogermanen*, I. p. 183.
[17] Petersen, 'Hittite and Tocharian', *Language*, IX (1933). pp. 12 ff.
[18] *Hirt-Festschrift*, II. p. 237.
[19] *Ibid.*, p. 239.

SOUTH RUSSIA, THE INDO-EUROPEAN HOME-LAND

Conjointly, these three pointers, it is needless to add, indicate South Russia as the El Dorado we are searching for. Our result receives confirmation also from two non-Indo-European language-groups, namely, Finno-Ugrian and Semitic. Finnish shows so many Indo-European characteristics that it would perhaps have been straightway declared to be an Indo-European dialect, had it been a new discovery[20] (like Tocharian). Möller,[21] on the other hand, has at least made it probable that the Semites, who came to Arabia from a northern home, had been in some sort of contact with the original Indo-Europeans. It is from South Russia alone that the primitive Indo-Europeans could have contacted both the Finno-Ugrians and the Semites. Thus the linguistic evidence, so far available, leads us to the conclusion that South Russia was the home-land of the Aryans.

[20] Hermann Hirt, *op. cit.*, I. p. 72.
[21] See his Introduction in *Vergleichendes indogermanisch-semitisches Wörterbuch*, p. xvi.

CULTURAL INTERRELATION BETWEEN INDIA AND THE OUTSIDE WORLD BEFORE AŚOKA

IN the dim past, even before the dawn of recorded history, the early inhabitants of India had contacts with the outside world since Neolithic times Trade relations matured into cultural relations, and there was an interchange of civilization as time passed. Civilization may be said to be the outcome of reciprocal action and reaction due to impact of different nations. Though it is true that a conquering nation carries its own civilization to the conquered, and culture is often imposed by coercion, it is not always the case that the conquerors are superior in civilization. There are instances when the victors absorbed the culture of the vanquished, as was the case with the Aryans. Sometimes, culture is imperceptibly assimilated by unconscious adoption of customs and modes of thought. In considering the cultural intercourse of India with the outside world, we shall have to judge the effects of the interrelation or mutual cultural influence dispassionately, taking into consideration the chronology and social factors rather than political points.

Scholars hold diametrically opposite views regarding the original home of the Aryans and the age of the *Ṛg-Veda*, and before dealing with the cultural contacts of India with the outside world, a brief reference may be made to these topics. According to traditional history as recorded in the Purāṇas, India itself is the home of the Aryans, and it was from here that they expanded in different directions to various countries of the world spreading the Aryan culture. This view regards the *Ṛg-Veda* and Vedic Aryans as earlier than the Indus valley civilization, and interprets the Boghaz-keui inscriptions as records in the outward march of the Aryans. The current view among the western scholars maintains that the original home of the Aryans was outside India—either in Europe, Russia, or Central Asia ; that Aryans entered India some time about the middle of the second millennium B.C. ; and that they overcame and destroyed the Indus valley civilization on their arrival in India. In the following pages, facts about cultural contacts have been stated without insisting on the antiquity of the Ṛg-Vedic Aryans or their being autochthonous in India.

The picture of the cultural contacts that has been drawn in the following pages is based on literary and archaeological evidence. Under the former, from the Indian side come the ancient Vedic literature and the Jātakas. From the other side are the Jewish chronicles and the accounts of

Greek historians. The archaeological evidence comprises the vast material that has been unearthed during the last century and a half, since the value of archaeology was recognized in reconstructing pre- and proto-history.

MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

The means of communication for commercial or cultural contacts between different countries were entirely by land at the beginning. Rafts or canoes and sea-going vessels were employed later, but marine navigation was sparsely used in the ancient world. There is a wide difference of opinion among scholars as to whether the Ṛg-Vedic Aryans had knowledge of sea- and ocean-going vessels. The references in the *Ṛg-Veda* to 'the treasures of ocean', 'gains of trade', 'ship with a hundred oars', 'shipwreck', etc. clearly show that Vedic Aryans in ancient India knew the ocean and sailed in ships to distant lands.[1] Some Indologists, however, interpret these to refer only to the river Sindhu. The doubts about the knowledge of ancient Indians of the sea have been set at rest by the finds in the Indus valley, which indicate that the inhabitants had ocean-going ships and had connections by sea with Sumer.[2]

The geographical configuration of India played an important rôle in her contacts with the outside world. The formidable lofty mountain barrier on one side and the ocean on the other have hardly affected her close and significant contact with the countries beyond her borders. Panikkar, however, considers that 'India was, from the beginning of history, isolated to a large extent in her evolution', and finds that the individual and special characteristics of her civilization are due to this isolation.[3] It was only during medieval times, on account of restrictions put by the Smṛti-rules on crossing the ocean, foreign travel, contact with foreigners, etc.—the *kali-varjyas*—, that an insular tendency was fostered among the Hindus, which stopped all contact with outside and impeded their progress.

THE MAIN ROUTES

India's contact with the outside world was carried on both by land and sea routes. The great Himalayan mountains had to be scaled for commercial intercourse with the west, north, and east opening up contacts with Persia, Iraq, Egypt, Greece, Rome, Central Asia, China, Tibet, Burma, etc. It would be useful to know about the important routes connecting India to her neighbours on the west, north, and east. We shall first deal with the routes to the west.

[1] The present writer has dealt with the problem in his paper 'Samudra in the *Ṛg-Veda*', *Prabuddha Bharata*, March 1953.

[2] Cf. Mackay, *Early Indus Civilizations*, pp. 151 f.

[3] *Survey of Indian History*, p. 1.

The first route was through the Khyber Pass to the Upper Kabul valley and then across the Hindukush to Balkh on the highway connecting east and west. From Balkh radiated several routes to China and Central Asia on the east, and two to the west. The first went down the Oxus to the Caspian and from there to the Black Sea ports along the Kur and Phasis. The other passed through Herat, skirted the Karmanian desert to the north, and passing through the Caspian gates reached Antioch by way of Ctesiphon and Hecatompylos. Two more routes passed via Kandahar, one joining the above route at Herat, while the other proceeded through Persepolis and Susa.[4]

The sea routes started from the mouth of the Sindhu and went along the coast to the head of the Persian Gulf. Then ships proceeded up the Euphrates and either joined the overland route at Seleucia or went along the shores of Arabia to Suez. From Seleucia the road ran to Nisibis and Edessa, whence one road passed to Damascus and Tyre, while the other, crossing the Euphrates at Zeugma, led to Antioch. From Antioch, a great route ran to the sea at Ephesus via Tarsus and Apamea in Phrygia.[5] The merchandise was carried by land from Suez to Egypt and to ports like Tyre and Sidon.

There were three routes that connected India with China in ancient times, two overland and the third an all-sea route. The first ran across Afghanistan over the passes of Hindukush to Bactria and thence through Central Asia to the western border of China. The second passed through Upper Burma to the south-western provinces of China. The all-sea route passed along the coasts of Indo-China and through the islands of the East Indies.

I. INDIA AND THE WEST

In our treatment of the subject, we have dealt with each region in a chronological sequence as far as possible.

(a) *India and Afghanistan*: The region between the Sindhu and Hindukush was culturally a part of India during our period. The *Ṛg-Veda* refers to the Kubhā (Kabul), Krumu (Kurram), Suvāstu (Swat), and Gomati (Gomal), as also to the Alinas, Bhalānasas, and Pakthas who dwelt in Afghanistan, thus indicating their intimate association with India during the Ṛg-Vedic period. Earlier also, we find that the Indus valley was in cultural and commercial contact with Afghanistan. Though, during a later period, its western portion was subjugated by the Persians and Greeks, it continued to be Indian in culture. The grammarian Pāṇini and the

[4] Tarn, *Hellenistic Civilisation*, pp. 210 f.; Mc Crindle, *Ancient India*, pp. 204 f.
[5] Tarn, *op. cit.*, pp. 211 f.

Mahābhārata knew the Afridis and the Mohmands as Āprīta and Madhumat. Both in its vocabulary and grammatical structure, the Pashto is a dialect of Sanskrit. Afghanistan and Baluchistan were under the effective control of the Mauryas, and the region was under the influence of Brāhmaṇism and Buddhism till the conquest by Islam.

(b) *India and Iraq, Asia Minor, etc.*: Ancient India had contacts with contemporary Chalcolithic civilizations. There is a general agreement between the civilizations of Egypt, Sumer, and the Indus valley with regard to fundamental ideas, discoveries, and inventions. The general features which the Indus valley shared in common with the other civilizations may be summarized as: 'city life, civilization of cereals, domestication of cattle and sheep, metallurgy, a textile industry, manufacture of bricks and pots, drilling of hard stones for beads, an affection for lapis lazuli, a knowledge of faience'.[6] Nothing definite can be stated with regard to the origin of these inventions, some of which probably started independently in different regions; some are the result of diffusion. Besides these, each civilization had its peculiar characteristics.

The Indus valley had close commercial contacts with Sumer since the beginnings of these civilizations. The magnitude of the contact would be at once recognized when it is seen that, in the early days of the discovery of the Indus valley civilization, some archaeologists named it Indo-Sumerian. There is ample evidence to prove that a flourishing trade existed between the Indus valley and Sumer in ancient times both by land routes and by sea.

On the side of Sumer, we find that lapis lazuli, the semi-precious stone most commonly used in Sumerian jewellery, came from the frontiers of Persia and India. Mesopotamia received its amazonite from Central India and Transbaikalia. Other importations from the Indus valley include pot-stone and manufactured articles such as etched carnelian beads, seals, and even pottery. Numerous seals of Indian design and workmanship have been found at various Sumerian and Elamite sites. The Ur tombs revealed a little figure of a squatting monkey, precisely similar to figures found in the Indus valley. Tell Asmar recorded representations of other Indian animals, the elephant, the rhinoceros, and the gharial, which appear on a seal of undoubted Indian workmanship. These not only show close commercial contact, but indicate mutual cultural intercourse by people actually staying in the other regions.

There are several importations from Sumer in the Indus valley. A white marble seal, an engraved steatite vessel, an etched carnelian bead, a model ram, an adze axe, small pottery rings used as net-weights, horned figures, and toilet-sets are among the important importations.

[6] Gordon Childe, *New Light on the Most Ancient East*, p. 224.

Besides the above commercial contacts, we may note cultural contacts as evidenced in the similarity of fashions. Men in both regions wore a long beard and long hair done up in a bun at the back, but shaved their upper lip. The *svastika* and the Cross are religious and magical symbols in both regions, and Sumerian influence is found in the portrayals of a hero fighting lions, and a half-human monster like Sumerian Ea-banni grappling with a bull or a tiger. Sumer received knobbed ware from the Indus valley. Cotton (not the product of the wild tree) came to be known to Sumer through the Indus valley, and it was called *sindon* on account of its association with the Sindhu.

There is no definite evidence of continuity of the contact down to historical times without any break. The next testimony of India's contact is given by old documents coming from Babylonia and Asia Minor.

In the names of their kings recorded in the Kassite documents (*c.* 1760 B.C.) occur elements recalling Indo-Aryan deities (e.g. Surias, Marutas, Bugas). These Kassites introduced into Babylonia the use of the horse for drawing chariots and its later Babylonian name *susu* seems to be derived from *aśva.*

Tel-el-Amarna tablets (1460 B.C.) refer to the rulers among the Mitanni on the Upper Euphrates who bore names like Artatama, Suttarna, Dusratta, which are Aryan, suggesting that the ruling dynasty was Aryan.

Boghaz-keui inscriptions (1360 B.C.) record a treaty between the Hittite king and the Mitanni king who was defeated in a battle. The Mitanni gods (In-da-ra, U-ru-w-na or A-ru-na, Mi-it-tra, Na-sa-at-ti-ia) along with Babylonian deities are invoked to protect the treaty. There is another document from Boghaz-keui which deals with horse breeding and contains a series of Aryan numerals—*aika, teras, panzas, satta, nav.* It may be noted that the words do not exhibit the changes which distinguish Iranian from the Indian forms, indicating that the words were borrowed either from the Indians or from their ancestors before bifurcation into Indians and Iranians.

All this evidence suggests that 'there was in Mitanni, after about 1450 B.C., a dynasty with Aryan names, worshipping Aryan gods, founded upon the power of their Aryan troops, the *maryanni*, and characterized by their superior horse breeding'.[7] As already indicated with regard to the original home of the Aryans, there is a diversity of opinion among scholars with regard to the presence of the Aryans in the heart of the Semitic civilization. While Jacobi, Pargiter, and Konow opine that the Mitanni must have reached Babylonia by sea and settled there, Macdonell, Keith, and others maintain that they were a branch of the Aryans on their way to India from Central Europe.

[7] Herzfeld, *Iran in the Ancient East,* p. 191.

Later evidence of contact with India is found in the apes, Indian elephants, and Bactrian camels drawn on the obelisk of Shalmanesar III (860 B.C.). The word *'sindhu'* found in the library of Assurbanipal (668-626 B.C.), which has been interpreted to mean 'Indian cotton', also shows contact with India. 'Precious stones, the product of the sea (pearls ?), timber, striped clothing, and spices of all kinds'—all products of India—were included in the tribute which Tiglath Pileser III (745-727 B.C.) got from the Chaldaean State of Bit Yakim. The ports in the Persian Gulf were made centres for the gold of Karmania and the Himalayas by the same ruler.[8] In the palace built by Sennacherib (704-681 B.C.) at Nineveh was laid out a park which included, among others, 'trees bearing wool' imported from India.[9] Logs of Indian teak have been found in the temple of the Moon at Mughar ('Ur' of the Chaldees) and in the palace of Nebuchadnezzar—both of the sixth century B.C.

Bāveru Jātaka tells of Indian merchants going on periodical voyages to the land of Bāveru (Babylon). Birds being scarce in Bāveru, an Indian crow brought by merchants evoked admiration, which was surpassed by the wonderful performing peacock which appeared in the next trip. Indians were experienced mariners in olden times, and various kinds of birds and beasts were exported.

Indian merchants traded with the merchants of the south-east and south coast of Arabia, and the Arabian merchants took the Indian goods to Syria and Egypt. It was thus that Solomon in the tenth century B.C. got Indian sandalwood, precious stones, ivory, apes, and peacocks. Most of these articles mentioned in the Jewish annals bear names which can be traced to Indian originals. Thus Hebrew *thuki* (*-im*) is Tamil *tokai,* peacock, the bird with the splendid tail (*toka,* tail, from *to,* to hang) ; *almug,* sandalwood, is probably from Sanskrit *valgu* ; *kophu* is Sanskrit *kapi,* ape, borrowed also by the Egyptians as *kafu ; shen habbin,* ivory, is a translation of Sanskrit *ibha-danta,* elephant's tooth, *habbin* being but *ibha* (cf. also the Egyptian *ebu* and the Greek *el-epha-s, el* being the Arab prefix) ; Hebrew *sadin,* cotton cloth, Arabic *satin,* Greek *sindon,* all come from *sindhu,* already noted as standing for Indian cotton cloth ; Hebrew *karpas* and Greek *karpas-os* are from Sanskrit *kārpāsa,* cotton. Trade in teak, ebony, sandalwood, and blackwood between Barygaza (Broach) and the Euphrates was still flourishing in the second century A.D.

On the literary side may be mentioned the curious resemblance between the *Mahosadha Jātaka* and the Story of Judgement of Solomon. Scholars

[8] Schoff (Ed.), *The Periplus,* pp. 123, 160.
[9] *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1910), p. 403. Herodotus (iii. 106) uses the expression 'wool-bearing trees' to describe the cotton plant.

have sought to trace the origin of the Flood Legend in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* to Babylonia, and the influence of Chaldaean astronomy and Babylonian weights and measures upon India. But it cannot yet be regarded as settled. Recent excavations tend to show that weights and measures were independently developed in different civilizations. The theory of the Semitic origin of the Indian alphabet has received a rude shock after the discovery of the pictographic script of the Indus valley.

(c) *India and Iran*: Its natural geographical position invests the Iranian plateau with peculiar importance, as it was the point of junction through which all movements that ever crossed the great Asiatic continent passed. Situated between the plains of the Euphrates and the Sindhu, Iran was in close association with both in prehistoric and historic times, and influenced the culture of its neighbours. Indeed, as Gordon Childe remarks, further excavations in Iran will lead to the solution of many a riddle in archaeology.[10]

Contact between India and Iran goes back to prehistoric times. The prevalence of the conception of Indian snake-gods and of the matriarchal social institutions has been taken to indicate that western Indian and Iranian aborigines formed the same or homogeneous ethnical group which included the ancient Elamites.[11] They were in close cultural relationship with the Subaraeans, the aborigines of Mesopotamia, but different from the aboriginal population of Sumer, whether Sumerian or Semite.

During the proto-historic period, we find parallels between pottery motifs in Iran and the Indus valley. Close commercial and cultural contact between the two regions may be indubitably inferred from the finds of similar or identical objects in both the Indus valley and Iran. Ancient Iran supplied the Indus valley with copper. An Indus seal, along with a glazed pot and a vase containing a representation of a humped bull, has been recovered in Iran. Indo-Iranian borderlands record pottery agreeing in technique and motifs with the Amri ware in the Indus valley. There is also similarity in wheeled vehicles and button seals. A fragmentary stone vase from Mohenjo-daro has its exact counterpart at Susa.

The Aryans settled in Iran about the beginning of the second millennium B.C., either during their migration to India from their homeland outside, or on their expansion outside from their homeland in India. The Hindus stand in close kinship with the Persians with regard to tradition, religious beliefs, ritual observances, and customs and manners. These early ties are reflected in the similarities of the languages of India and Iran: some of the modern Indian languages bear the same relation to the parent Vedic speech

[10] *Op. cit.*, p. 227.
[11] Herzfeld, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

which the modern Persian language bears (through the Old Iranian and Pehlavi) to the ancient Aryan speech. Avesta and its commentaries help us in the proper comprehension of the early religious and linguistic history of India.

The period of Achaemenians was the glorious age in the annals of the history of Iran, and they extended the Persian dominions to the borders of India. There are contradictions in the accounts of Greek historians with regard to the invasions of India before Alexander. While according to Nearchus, Semiramis and Cyrus invaded India and escaped with but twenty and seven of their army, Megasthenes maintains that India was never invaded before Alexander. We cannot be certain about the truth, and Jackson tries to bring harmony in the conflicting accounts by stating that Cyrus campaigned in the territories corresponding to the present Afghanistan and Baluchistan and that Alexander's historians were probably inclined to minimize the accomplishments of Cyrus.[12]

Gandhāra and India were included among the twenty satrapies under Darius, and their extent, according to Jackson, comprised the 'course of the Indus from Kalabagh to the sea, including the whole of Sind, and perhaps included a considerable portion of the Punjab east of the Indus', and probably reached as far as the Beas.[13] Jackson also holds that the Persian dominion in India continued to the end of the Achaemenian sway in 330 B.C.[14] In a recent article, Majumdar has shown that there is no evidence to show that Cyrus ever led an expedition in North India (as is generally believed), that 'the Indian dominions of Darius were not in the Punjab or Sind, but lay on the other side of the Indus', and that there are no legitimate grounds to conclude that the Persian dominion over India continued after the death of Darius.[15]

India contributed a third of the revenue of Darius's empire, 360 talents of gold dust equalling over a million pounds sterling. Darius sent a naval expedition under his general Scylax to explore the Sindhu. Indian regiments fought under Persian generals in Graeco-Persian wars in the reigns of Xerxes and Darius III.

Achaemenian contact had its effect on India in several ways. The Mauryan administration was greatly influenced by Persian ideas, as would appear from a number of Iranian words used in it, as also from the adoption of the Aramaean and Kharoṣṭhī scripts, and from the court etiquette and manners. The general use of stone, under the Mauryas, for columns

[12] *The Cambridge History of India*, I. pp. 331 f.
[13] *Ibid.*, I. pp. 337 f.
[14] *Ibid.*, I. p. 341.
[15] *Indian Historical Quarterly*, XXV. pp. 163, 165.

and statues, in place of wood, ivory, or clay, was due to Graeco-Persian influence. As rightly observed by the learned critic Chanda, 'All Aśoka's monuments, whether monolithic columns, rock inscriptions, or sculptures, bear witness to a happy adaptation of Achaemenid models'. The lions of Sarnath display the combination of the vigour and dignity of Assyro-Persian tradition with genuinely indigenous elements. Belated specimens of the Achaemenian style are to be found in the Śuṅga period.

(d) *India and Greece*: At the time of Homer, the Greeks probably had never heard of India; the most they knew was that peoples of dark complexion dwelt, some towards the setting, and some towards the rising, sun. It was only through the Egyptians, Phoenecians, and, later, Persians that rumours about India reached the Greeks. No Greek navigator found his way to the Erythraean Sea. In the sixth century B.C., the Persian empire touched India and Greece, and contingents from the Greek cities of Asia Minor served in the same armies with levies from the banks of the Sindhu. The Achaemenian conquest of Greek cities in Asia Minor let in a flood of light, and the Greeks became aware of the kingdoms, cities, races, and languages to the east.

The first Greek book about India was by Scylax of Caryanda, a Greek sea captain, whom Darius employed to explore the course of the Sindhu. Written in the latter part of the sixth century B.C., the book probably contained travellers' tales. Hecataeus of Miletus (before 500 B.C.), the next writer, shows some advance by mentioning the Gandhari, Opiai, Kalatiai, and the city of Argante, as also the names of the Caspian Sea, the Persian Gulf, and the Sindhu. Sophocles (495-405 B.C.) mentions rice, peacocks, and sandalwood, the specifically Indian products, which were known to the Greeks only by their Indian, Tamil, names. Herodotus (b. 484 B.C.) gives a number of details about India. His works refer to the voyage of Scylax from the mouth of the Sindhu to the Persian Gulf; to the cotton and bamboos of India; gold-digging ants as large as foxes; wool-bearing trees 'surpassing in beauty and in quality the wool of sheep'; and a number of wonderful myths about India. The next writer, Ctesias of Cnidus, on account of his residence at the Persian court for seventeen years (415-397 B.C.), had exceptional opportunities for acquiring knowledge about India; but his accounts show him to be a deliberate liar.[16]

Alexander's campaigns shifted the focus of political activity towards the east, and the direction of world commerce changed to the cities founded or revived by Alexander. Alexandria became the city of world trade and cosmopolitan civilization, where converged the combined commerce of

[16] *The Cambridge History of India*, I. p. 397.

Ethiopia, Arabia, India, and Egypt. Babylon was defeated by Seleucia, which became the metropolis of Mesopotamia.

As a result of common subjection under the Achaemenians, India and Greece came in closer contact, Persia serving as a wonderful intermediary, and besides exchange of commercial products, there was a significant exchange on the cultural side also. Though nothing definite can be said regarding the matrimonial alliance between Candragupta and Seleucus Nicator, it is certain that the first three Mauryan rulers had close contacts with Greece. Bindusāra wrote to Antiochus I asking him to buy and have sent to him some sweet wine, some figs, and a sophist to teach him to argue. Antiochus forwarded the figs and the wine, but explained that sophists were not a marketable commodity among the Greeks. There were diplomatic exchanges resulting in closer contact. Many analogies are found between the Greek philosophers and the Sāṁkhya system of philosophy, and we shall deal at some length with the question about the influence of India on Greek philosophy on account of its importance.

Sir William Jones was the first to point out the similarities between the Sāṁkhya system and Pythagorean philosophy. The establishment of the Achaemenian empire touching the frontiers of India and Greece provides definite evidence of India's contact with Greece before Alexander, which some scholars are inclined to deny. Aristoxenus, the musician, quotes an anecdote about certain Indian philosophers, who found their way to Athens and interviewed Socrates. They asked Socrates the object of his philosophy. Upon being told that it was an inquiry into human affairs, the Indians burst into laughter, saying that no one could inquire into human affairs if he were ignorant of divine ones. This story, if true, may explain the many points of similarity to Indian philosophy in Plato.[17] It also shows that Indian philosophers travelled to Greece, and were so well versed in the Greek language and philosophy as to be able to discuss with Socrates.

Schraeder, who has shown the similarity of many religio-philosophical and mathematical doctrines of Pythagoras with those current in India, credits India with the origin of these doctrines, because in India they are comprehensible by the intellectual life of the people, while in Pythagoras they appear without any connection or explanatory background. It is likely that Pythagoras came across Indian philosophers in Greece or somewhere in the Persian empire and inherited his philosophical ideas from them. Colebrooke and Garbe admit Indian influence on Pythagoras, and Garbe draws attention to the similarity between the theory of Thales and the Vedic idea of primeval waters as the origin of the universe and between the Upaniṣadic doctrine of the All-One and the philosophy of the Eleatics.

[17] Rawlinson, *India*, p. 55.

According to him, Greek physiologers like Anaximander, Democritus, Empedocles, and Epicurus were influenced by the Sāṁkhya philosophy. The doctrine of Empedocles that nothing can arise which has not existed before, and that nothing existing can be annihilated, finds its exact parallel in the Sāṁkhya doctrine about the eternity and indestructibility of matter. Greek tradition records that Thales, Empedocles, Anaxagoras, Democritus, and others undertook journeys to oriental countries in order to study philosophy. Weber finds the influence of the Indian conception of *vāc* upon the idea of logos. Lassen, however, finds no Indian influence on Greek philosophy. In view of the antiquity of India's contact with Greece and the Greek tradition referred to earlier, it seems fairly certain that Greek philosophy is derived from Indian philosophy.

Though Indian literature was highly prized in the west, we have no definite account as to its precise influence. The theory propounded by Weber as to the influence of Homer on the *Rāmāyaṇa* is exploded, and has merely an academic interest. Weber also sought to trace Greek origin for the Indian drama. The antiquity of Indian dramatic theory and practice goes against such inference. There is, of course, nothing impossible in the presumption of the influence of Greek drama on Indian drama; but we lack positive evidence. The casual coincidences pointed out between Sanskrit drama and the new Attic comedy[18] cannot be regarded as the source of the influence. Since the Greek theatre, so far as we know, had no use for the curtain, the argument based on *yavanikā* (curtain) is of little value. Even if the word be taken to be so called on account of the material which came from Greek merchants, no influence from Greece is found on the Indian stage arrangement. Besides, there are several fundamental differences between the conceptions and theories of Sanskrit and Greek drama. The former entirely disregards unities of time and place; romantic and fabulous elements are fully introduced; the theatres were square, rectangular, or triangular. Hence, even if certain striking parallels and coincidences be found between Greek and Sanskrit drama, there is no evidence of influence from any side. Fundamental differences render borrowing or influence out of the question, so that the affinities should be considered as independently developed.

With regard to the Greek influence on art and religion, of which too much has been made by some scholars, the later Graeco-Roman influence is evident to some extent. There is a considerable influence of the Yavanas (Greeks) on Indian astronomy, as has been admitted by the *Gārgī Saṁhitā*,

[18] Such as division into acts, number of acts, departure of all actors from the stage at the end of the acts, the scenic convention of asides, the announcing of the entry and identity of a new character by a remark from a character already on the stage, etc.

which credits the Yavanas with originating astronomy, and considers them worthy of veneration as gods for this. We cannot be certain as to the influence of Greece on Indian medicine.

The great demand for spices, aromatic articles, fine fabrics, and precious stones shows the introduction in the west of oriental luxury in food, clothing, and manners. Elephants came to be used in war in the west under the influence of India, and we read in later accounts that the reserve of the army of the Sassanids was formed of elephants from India, which inspired the Romans with terror. They carried great wooden towers full of soldiers and adorned with flags. They stood in a line at the rear of the army in order to give it confidence during the battle.

(e) *India and Egypt*: Egypt, being well acquainted with the Red Sea and Somali coasts during a considerable period of her history, may have come in direct contact with Sumer or Elam, to whose influence a good part of her very early civilization can be traced. There is, however, no evidence of direct contact with Egypt in the days of the Indus valley. Certain objects and motifs indicate indirect communication through Sumer and Elam. Thus, bull-legged stools, small model beds with a female figure reclining, segmented beads, hemispherical terminals of necklaces, and the device of a deity grasping a lion on either side are common in these three ancient civilizations—the Indus valley, Sumer, and Egypt. These may have found their way to India and Egypt through the agency of Sumer or Elam, in the absence of direct intercourse. The cord pattern occurring on a copper tablet in the Indus valley and on three Egyptian seals is the most striking link between the two countries. As no exact counterpart has yet been found in any country between India and Egypt, it cannot be said whether it originated in India or in a country further west, whence it spread to both Egypt and India.

The tombs of Egypt contained Indian products like indigo, tamarind, or muslin in which the mummies were wrapped. Ebony, ivory, and cotton goods, mentioned in Egyptian inscriptions as being supplied to Egypt in the second millennium B.C. by the Abyssinian and Somali traders, came from India. Among the booty which one of the Pharaohs carried in his vessel into Egypt were included elephant's teeth, gold, precious stones, sandalwood, and monkeys which came from India.

It appears that in the time of the Ptolemies, Scylax's voyage was probably forgotten or disbelieved, so that nobody thought that India could be reached by sea, with the result that goods from India were carried for the most part across the desert on camels' backs. Unsettled conditions following the death of Alexander rendered the great overland caravan trade almost impossible. Taking advantage of it, Ptolemy Philadelphus

(285-246 B.C.) of Egypt tried to develop the Red Sea trade. Under him the Suez canal was opened and used for conveyance. According to Atheneus, who speaks of the growing intimacy between India and Egypt, in the procession of this ruler there figured, among others, Indian women, Indian hunting dogs, and Indian cows, as also Indian spices carried on camels. He further says that the saloon of Ptolemy Philoptor's yacht was lined with Indian stone.

That India had trade relations by sea with countries as far as Africa would appear from the fact that the Hindus not only traded with Madagascar, but settled there. The old name of the island was Malay, and tradition would connect Mangalore with the early settlers. The language current in Madagascar shows a mixture of Sanskrit vocabulary indicating ancient contact.

For culture to be influenced in any way, the countries are required to be in close and continued contact. Such contacts were evident between the ancient civilizations of the world, and their effect is already indicated. During later times, Persia and Greece, from among the countries to the west, were in close association with India, and the effects of the intercourse on both sides have been told earlier at the proper place.

II. INDIA AND THE NORTH

From among Central Asia, China, Nepal, and Tibet, which lie to the north of India, only China can claim an ancient civilization and early contacts with India during the period under review. The Mauryan empire included part of regions beyond the borders of India, and these came under the sphere of the missionary propaganda of Aśoka, which also influenced the surrounding countries. The royal dynasty of Khotan, according to one tradition, is said to have been founded by Kustana, son of Aśoka, while another tradition refers to Kuṇāla, another son of Aśoka, in this connection. Many Indian colonies sprang up in these regions with several Buddhist *stūpas* and *vihāras*. This pertains, however, to the period of Aśoka and later, which is beyond the scope of the present article. Tibet comes into the picture as late as the seventh or eighth century A.D.

(a) *India and Nepal*: The language, script, religion, and art of Nepal, which stands immediately on the borders of India are under great influence from India. Lumbinī, which has been marked by an Aśokan pillar as the birth-place of the Buddha, is situated within Nepal. Aśoka introduced Buddhism into Nepal and built *stūpas* at Pāṭan.

(b) *India and China*: Reference has already been made to the routes between India and China. An early contact with China may be inferred from China being indicated as one of the probable sources of jade in the

ancient Indus valley.[19] Old Chinese legends refer to trade with Malacca as early as the twelfth century B.C., and emigrations from the eastern coast of India to Indo-China and the East Indian Archipelago prove active trade in early times between India and China. Silk and sugar reached India from China, which received in exchange storax and other incense, red coral, costus, pepper, and perhaps gold from Assam washings.

It is generally held that China received its name from the first Ts'in dynasty (249-207 B.C.), so that literary references to it pertain to a period later than the second century B.C. Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*, professedly assigned to the late fourth or the early third century B.C., clearly refers to varieties of China silk (II.11), and on the above derivation of China, the date and authorship of the work become suspect. If, however, the date 300 B.C. is confirmed for the appearance of the name Cīna in India in the sense of China, Pelliot suggests that the State of Ts'in in Chan-si in North-West China, which was in contact with the populations of Central Asia, gave rise to the name China anterior to the Ts'in dynasty. On the analogy of Khitai in later times—or, as suggested by Majumdar, of the name Sindhu (Hindu) for the whole of India—,[20] the name China began to be applied to China first in Central Asia from that of the principality through which one entered China from there. Besides the *Arthaśāstra*, there are also references to China in the *Mahābhārata* and the *Manu Smṛti*, suggesting the antiquity of a regular trade intercourse between the two countries; but on account of the disputed chronology of these texts, no definite age can be fixed to these references. According to the Chinese legends, Indian Buddhist missionaries first landed in China in 217 B.C.

III. INDIA AND THE EAST

Land routes through East Bengal, Assam, and Manipur conveyed the Indians to the Far East. They proceeded to Upper Burma through the various passes in the Patkai range of the Manipur hills, and to Lower Burma through Arakan. From Tāmralipti (modern Tamluk in Midnapore District) in the North, vessels regularly proceeded to the Far East along the coasts of Bengal and Burma, and crossing the Bay of Bengal reached Malaya, East Indies, and Indo-China. Along the southern coast, the ports were one at Palura in Orissa, three near Masulipatam at the mouth of the Kṛṣṇā, and one at Puhar or Kāveripaṭṭinam at the mouth of the Kāverī. The intercourse with the Far East depended on deep-sea voyages undertaken with great daring and adventure from these ports. The south-

[19] Gordon Childe, *op. cit.*, p. 210.
[20] *The Age of Imperial Unity* (Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, Second Edition, 1953), p. 644.

eastern countries include Malaya, Sumatra, Java, Bali, Cambodia, and Siam.

Sylvain Lévi states that communication between the ports of South India and the Pacific Islands was well established many centuries before the Christian era. But the earliest evidence of actual emigration comes in the first century of the Christian era. The strong cultural influences which transformed these far eastern countries into almost a cultural province of India were effected in the early centuries of the Christian era, so that it is beyond the scope of the present article to deal with them. The route for emigration was by land across Malaya and thence overseas through the Straits to Singapore.

(a) *India and Burma*: An early contact between Burma and the ancient Indus valley may be inferred from the fact of Burma being indicated as the probable source of jade in the Indus valley.[21] For her religion, philosophy, canonical literature, sacred language, and script Burma is indebted to India.

The *Rāmāyaṇa* speaks of Burma as the land of silver mines. Burmese chronicles state that thirty-two generations before the Buddha, Abhirāja, a prince of the Śākya clan of Kapilavastu, invaded Upper Burma, founded the city of Saṅkissa (Tagaung) on the Irawadi, and made himself king of the surrounding region. His younger son continued at Saṅkissa, while the elder ruled over Arakan. The next colonization was effected from the Gaṅgā valley during the Buddha's time, and the ruling dynasty remained in authority for sixteen generations, after which, having lost Upper Burma, they set up a new kingdom in Lower Burma with capital at Śrī-kṣetra (near Prome).

(b) *India and South-East Asia*: Indian story-literature, particularly the Jātakas and Jaina tales, contain frequent references to merchants sailing to the east for purposes of trade. The stories indicate that the regions to the east and the islands of the East Indies, which were generally known as Suvarṇa-bhūmi or Suvarṇa-dvīpa—veritable land of gold—, were regarded as full of promise for adventurers and enterprising merchants with prospects of winning immense riches.

As we saw earlier in the case of Burma, local traditions in Yunan (South China), Arakan, Ligor, and Cambodia trace their kingdoms to Indian princes. While Yunan and Ligor ascribe the foundation to different descendants of Aśoka, the first Arakan king is said to be from Vārāṇasī, and an exiled prince of Indraprastha is said to have founded the Cambodian line.

[21] Gordon Childe, *op. cit.*, p. 210.

With regard to the eastern regions, though definite information about Indian influence may be said to have begun only since the early centuries of the Christian era, we may, in general, state that the sea routes to the east from the ports of the eastern coast of India had come into common use centuries before the Christian era.

IV. INDIA AND THE SOUTH

There were regular sailings from the mouth of the Gaṅgā to Ceylon along the eastern coast and thence along the western coast to Broach and beyond.

India and Ceylon: As Laṅkā in ancient days, Ceylon was the scene of the epic fight between Rāma and Rāvaṇa. Different traditions in Ceylon indicate that there were two streams of immigration to Ceylon—the first, mainly Dravidian, coming from Orissa and perhaps southern Bengal; and the second, mainly Aryan, starting from Sīhapura in Lāṭa (probably modern Sihor in Kathiawad) and Sopara. The latter gave the name Siṁhala-dvīpa to the island. Sinhalese chronology begins with the landing of Vijaya in 483 B.C.

Buddhist chronicles speak of the invasion of Ceylon by Vijaya, who is said to have sailed in a ship which would hold over 700 people. The Jātakas record trade with Ceylon and Suvaṇṇa-bhūmi from the eastern ports, notably Campā and Tāmralipti. Ceylon's Buddhism, Pali language, and much of artistic inspiration have come from India.

PART III

VEDIC CIVILIZATION

10

THE RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHIC CULTURE OF INDIA

THE cultural heritage of India is to be found primarily in her philosophy and religion; and the sources of her philosophical ideas and religious beliefs lie in the Vedas and the Upaniṣads. These ancient monuments of India's culture set for all time the direction of its march; and it can be said that it is by following their lead that India has survived the ravages of time. If in spite of successive invasions by alien hordes the soul of India has not been enslaved, and if even in the darkest days of her history the spark of Indian culture was not blown out, it was because India did not completely cut herself away from her moorings in spirituality.

STRENGTH BASED ON ETERNAL VALUES

Each civilization seems to have a genius for some particular aspect of life. Ancient Greece was devoted to art, and Rome to politics. But while these civilizations, and others pursuing similar ideals, perished and form now but dead chapters of history, India has stood like a 'Rock of Ages', weathering many a fierce storm, because her foundations are the eternal values of philosophy and religion, and not the shifting sands of the secular arts of beauty or governance. It is not that every Indian all the time was a philosopher or a man of the spirit; nor that wealth (*artha*) and pleasure (*kāma*) were not pursued by people in India. But there seems to be something in her very soil and air which makes a man at some stage or other in his life realize the futility of finite ends and seek for righteousness (*dharma*) and therethrough release (*mokṣa*) from finitude. Even if the average man would forget this higher call, there have appeared in India, in an unbroken succession, spiritual leaders to remind him of his true end and show him the way. 'The greatest men of India have always been not distinguished statesmen, valiant warriors, or astute merchants, but the messengers of the Spirit who appeal to the fundamental unity of all in the basic Reality which is spiritual, and a comprehensiveness of outlook which knows no narrow distinctions. They are the true bearers of culture which is sweetness and light—sweetness that expresses itself as universal love, and light that is spiritual wisdom. Their call is not to "my clan" or to "my community", but to the whole of humanity. Their message is not for a particular country or age, but for the entire world and for all

time.'[1] Such seers as Yājñavalkya and Uddālaka, Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, Gandhi and Ramana, who are the salt of the earth, have been the saviours of India and the custodians of her culture. They are a blessing not only to the country of their birth, but to the whole world.

WESTERN VIEW OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

It has puzzled many a western student of Indian thought how and why there has been maintained in India a close alliance between religion and philosophy. Generally speaking, the preacher and the philosopher alike in the West deplore this alliance for quite opposite reasons. To the preacher it would appear that Hinduism is too philosophical to be a religion. He finds in it a cold intellectualism, not an appeal to life in all its aspects, but an appeal to logic.[2] To the philosopher, Indian philosophy seems to be overweighted on the side of intuition because of its association with religion. The western philosopher imagines that reason as *darśana* is opposed to reason as inference ; and so, he thinks that the Indian *darśanas* do not pay sufficient attention to the rules of logic in developing their respective systems, that they do not confine themselves to the matter-of-fact world which is their only legitimate field, but appeal to the 'twilight zone of experience' which in his mind is associated with the occult and the mysterious, and that therefore the Indian schools of thought may at best be varieties of religion, but not systems of philosophy.[3]

That the western preacher and philosopher hold Indian culture to be defective for diametrically opposite reasons is an unconscious compliment to that culture. In condemning Hinduism as being too intellectual, the preacher has in mind the intellectualism and rationalism of the West, which started with a repudiation of religion, and have tended, in recent times, to repudiate metaphysics too. He does not see that though the philosophical systems in India make use of logic, they do insist at the same time on the need for the intuitive experience of Reality which, according to them, is the goal of true philosophic thinking. When the western philosopher criticizes Indian philosophy for its association with religion, he thinks of Christian theology as the pattern of all religion, and does not wish to put the hands of the philosophical clock back to the Middle Ages. The

[1] See the present writer's article 'The Contribution of the Gītācārya to the Cultural Unity of India', *The Vedanta Kesari*, February 1946.

[2] Robert A. Hume, *An Interpretation of India's Religious History* (Fleming H. Revell Co., New York, 1911), p. 164.

[3] See G. Watts Cunningham's article 'How Far to the Land of Yoga? An Experiment in Understanding' contributed to the Symposium on Oriental Philosophy in *The Philosophical Review*, November 1949.

identification of religion with dogma and the revolt against medievalism, which still seems to persist in the racial Unconscious of the West, are probably the reasons why Indian philosophy appears at first sight to be unacceptable to the western mind.

PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION INTERRELATED IN INDIA

It is true that philosophy and religion began as one in India, as is the case everywhere. But soon they came to be distinguished, though this distinction never resulted in a divorce. One can easily see the difference, for instance, between the *Bhāgavata* and the *Brahma-Sūtra* with its diverse commentaries. While the principal aim of the former is to induce *devotion* in one's heart for the Deity, the main object of the latter is to enable one to *understand* the nature of Reality. But the reason why the two, philosophy and religion, have been closely associated with each other in India is that the final objective of both is the same, viz. to make man realize his supreme end which is release from *saṁsāra* (cycle of birth and death). The purpose of religion is not only to refine man's emotions, but also to sublimate them and transform his entire life. Similarly, the task of philosophy is to bring light to the understanding and thereby help man realize his true nature.

The fact that in India philosophy has been essentially a quest for values seems to be the reason why Indian philosophy has maintained a close alliance with religion. Not intellectual curiosity or wonder, but the desire to realize the highest value in life was the principal spur for the philosopher's search. Man's supreme end was generally regarded as *mokṣa*, spiritual freedom; and this was the fulcrum on which both philosophy and religion turned. The logical methods of enquiry were, no doubt, adopted by the philosopher; but these were found to be not enough for realizing the goal of life. Similarly, it was discovered that, though a life lived in accordance with moral principles was absolutely essential, one cannot 'stay put' in the moral realm of claims and counter-claims, but should go beyond to the higher region of distinctionless, transcendent experience from which morality derives its sanction and value. Thus philosophy aimed at an ideal which was both trans-logical and supra-moral. Each value was accorded its proper place. It is therefore wrong to say that Indian philosophy is unethical in character. No one who has sufficient acquaintance with the systems of Indian thought will ever say that the importance of morality was minimized in any of them. If the aim is more than morality, it is uncharitable to think of it as immorality. The Indian philosopher recognized that even the lower ends like wealth (*artha*) and

pleasure (*kāma*) should be not opposed to righteousness (*dharma*),[4] not to speak of *mokṣa*, the *summum bonum*.[5]

It is the quest for *mokṣa*, then, that has kept Indian philosophy and religion together; and if philosophy has not become barren and religion blind in India, it must be due to their reciprocal influence. We can trace this influence right from the hymns of the *Ṛg-Veda* and the Upaniṣads, through the literature of the classical age, down to modern expositions of Indian culture. From the side of religion, the conception of a philosophic monotheism was formulated even as early as the Vedic hymns. And from the side of philosophy, a monistic or non-dualistic view was enunciated by the ancient seers. These two currents, philosophic monotheism and spiritualistic monism, have run on together, each influencing and enriching the other. It is these that flowered later in the systems respectively of Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara. We shall here confine our attention to the *śruti-prasthāna* (scriptural authority), and indicate the main features of these two principal phases of Indian culture.

MONOTHEISM THROUGH HARMONIZATION

The dominant trends of religio-philosophic thought in India, as we have said, are philosophic monotheism and spiritualistic monism. The roots of these may be discerned in the Vedic hymns. The conception of a plurality of gods cannot satisfy the human mind for long. Questions like 'To what god shall we offer our oblation?'[6] and 'Who saw the first-born?'[7] are asked by the Vedic *ṛṣis*. There are attempts in the hymns to bring together the various gods under one conception. Prayers are offered not only to the different deities severally, but also to all of them together as Viśve-devas (All-gods). Certain characteristic features of the gods, like creatorship of the world and lordship over the creatures, are abstracted, and are themselves regarded as God. Thus we have the conceptions of Viśvakarman (world-maker) and Prajāpati (lord of beings). In one hymn, the *Ṛg-Veda* declares repeatedly that the great divinity of the gods is one: *mahat-devānām-asuratvam-ekam* (III.55). Another famous passage reads:

[4] *Dharma*, a comprehensive term which includes law, religion, morality, righteousness, duty, benevolence, etc., is considered the primary virtue in Indian culture. It is defined as that which sustains society (cf. *Mbh.*, VIII.69.59, Calcutta edn.; *Bṛ. U.*, I.4.14; *Mahānārāyaṇa Upaniṣad*, 79·7), and is regarded as the highest social value on which are to be based the other two social values of *artha* and *kāma* and the trans-social value of *mokṣa*. Cf. Vyāsa's statement in the *Mahābhārata*, '*dharmād-arthaśca kāmaśca*' (XVIII.5.62). Śrī Kṛṣṇa declares in the *Bhagavad-Gītā* (VII.11): '*dharmāviruddho bhūteṣu kāmosmi*'—I am pleasure unopposed to *dharma*.

[5] The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (II.24) emphasizes: 'Not he who has not ceased from bad conduct, not he who is not tranquil, not he who is not composed, not he who is not of peaceful mind can obtain Him by (mere) intelligence (*prajñāna*).'

[6] *Kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema?* (*Ṛ.V.*, X.121).

[7] *Ko dadarśa prathamaṁ jāyamānam?* (*Ṛ.V.*, I.164.4).

'What is but one Reality, sages call it by different names—as Agni, Yama, and Mātariśvan' (*Ṛ.V.*, I.164.46). It may be noted that this attitude of universalism in faith has remained with Hinduism through the ages as one of its distinguishing traits. And it is this type of philosophic monotheism that makes for the difference of the Vedic religion from the Hebraic variety of monotheism. It was not by the proscription of other gods for the benefit of one national god that monotheism was reached in the Veda ; it was rather by way of harmonization, by discovering the underlying unity of the different conceptions of Godhead, that the Vedic seer arrived at the idea of the one God.

EVOLUTION OF NON-DUALISM

Even a philosophic monotheism failed to satisfy finally the inquiring mind of the ancient thinker. Anthropomorphism in some form or other may be inevitable so long as one suffers from the limitations of finitude consequent on identification with a human organism and the human kind. Man is not destined to end as man. When he reaches the higher regions of experience where all distinctions disappear, he realizes that any attempt to limit Reality is virtually to negate it. The Vedic seer succeeded in rising to heights of unified vision where there is no duality whatsoever. A glimpse of that vision is to be had in the Ṛg-Vedic conception of Aditi, the Boundless. Aditi is identified with all that has been and all that shall be.[8] A clearer insight into the conception of unity is to be found in what is known as the *Nāsadīya* hymn (*Ṛ.V.*, X.129), inadequately described as the 'Song of Creation'. In spite of the obscure nature of some of the expressions in the hymn, one can easily see that the philosopher-poet is making the best possible use of words to express the nature of a Reality which is essentially inexpressible:

'Then there was neither Aught nor Nought,
    no air or sky beyond.
What covered all? Where rested all?
    In watery gulf profound?

Nor death was there, nor deathlessness,
    nor change of night and day.
That one breathed calmly, self-sustained
    nought else beyond it lay.

[8] *R.V.*, I.89.10.

Gloom hid in gloom existed first—
    one sea, eluding view.
That one, a void in chaos wrapt,
    by inward fervour grew.

Within it first arose desire,
    the primal germ of mind,
Which nothing with existence links,
    as sages searching find.

The kindling ray that shot across
    the dark and drear abyss—
Was it beneath? Or high aloft?
    What bard can answer this?

There fecundating powers were found,
    and mighty forces strove—
A self-supporting mass beneath,
    and energy above.

Who knows, who ever told, from whence
    this vast creation rose?
No gods had then been born—who then
    can e'er the truth disclose?

Whence sprang this world and whether
    framed by hand divine or no—
Its Lord in heaven alone can tell,
    if even he can show.'[9]

In this beautiful poem is contained the essence of monism, or, to use a better expression, non-dualism, couched in exquisite words. The ultimate Reality is not named here ; it is not identified with any of the gods. 'No gods had then been born.' It is spoken of as 'That One' (*Tad-Ekam*) in the neuter gender, thus at once lifting us to a region beyond all anthropomorphic conceptions of the Deity. The inadequacy of intellectual categories to give a description of it is brought out by saying that it is beyond all opposites like being and non-being, death and life, night and day. We are also told that there is nothing other than it, that it is self-

[9] J. Muir's translation, *Original Sanskrit Texts*, V. p. 356.

sustained. It is not to be identified with an inert mass, for it 'breathed calmly'. What we refer to as creation is not an extraneous process added on to that One. In fact, all questions regarding creation, when properly framed, will turn out to be absurd. All that one can say of the universe, adopting the well-known Vedāntic term, is that it is Māyā. Thus, we find in the *Nāsadīya* hymn the foundations well and truly laid for Vedāntic non-dualism. 'We are here', as it has been aptly remarked, 'on the threshold of Upaniṣadic monism.'[10]

THE COSMIC AND ACOSMIC VIEWS OF REALITY

Corresponding to the two currents of Vedic thought, there are in the Upaniṣads what may be called the *saprapañca* (cosmic) and the *niṣprapañca* (acosmic) views of Reality. Brahman, the term by which the ultimate Reality is known in the Upaniṣads, is the ground of the manifestation of the universe, according to the first view; but according to the second, it is the basis of the illusory appearance of the world. In the terminology of the later Vedānta, the universe, on the *saprapañca* view, is a *pariṇāma* (transformation) of Brahman; whereas, on the *niṣprapañca* view, it is a *vivarta* (transfiguration) thereof. The cosmic view of Reality is that the Real is the one substance out of which the many modes constituting the world have come forth; Brahman is *saguṇa,* the bearer of attributes. The acosmic view, on the other hand, regards the Absolute as the distinctionless substrate whereon *somehow* the illusory world-show appears; Brahman *per se* is *nirguṇa,* attributeless.

THE COSMIC VIEW IN THE UPANIṢADS

The distinction between the Upaniṣadic cosmism and the western conceptions of God should be noted. Brahman, in the view of the Upaniṣadic thinkers, is not a demiurge or a *deus ex machina,* standing outside the world, while creating it and making it run. There is no extraneous matter out of which Brahman creates the universe. Were God to fashion the world out of a matrix which is 'out there', he would necessarily be limited by that matrix; and a limited or finite God is a contradiction in terms. The Upaniṣadic view is that there is nothing other than Brahman; that the world is but the manifestation of a part of Brahman; that Brahman is both the material and the efficient cause of the world (*abhinna-nimitta-upādāna-kāraṇa*). The *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (III.1.1) defines Brahman as that from which beings are born, that by which when born they live, and that into which they enter on deceasing. In the same Upaniṣad (II.1), we are

[10] M. Hiriyanna, *Outlines of Indian Philosophy* (George Allen & Unwin), p. 43.

told that from the Ātman (the supreme Self) arose in succession ether, air, fire, water, earth, herbs, food, and man. It also says: 'Brahman desired, "Let me become many! Let me procreate myself!" It performed austerity. Having performed austerity, it created all this, whatever there is here. Having created it, into it, indeed, it entered. Having entered into it, it became both the formed (*sat*) and the unformed (*tyat*), both the defined (*nirukta*) and the undefined, both the based (*nilayana*) and the non-based, both the conscious (*vijñāna*) and the unconscious, both the factual (*satya*) and the false (*anṛta*). As the real, it became whatever there is here. That is what they call the real' (II.6). From these texts of the *Taittirīya*, it is clear that Brahman is the *sole* cause of the world, that it is the ultimate *intelligent* cause, and that all things, conscious and non-conscious, are grounded in it.

Of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and the *Chāndogya*, the two oldest Upaniṣads, the latter seems to teach mainly the *saprapañca* view of Reality. In what is known as the *Śāṇḍilya-vidyā* (III.14), Brahman is declared to be 'all this' and cryptically defined as *tajjalān*—as that (*tat*) which generates (*ja*) the world, reabsorbs (*li*) it, and supports (*an*) it. Describing the Real as 'comprehending all activities, all odours, all tastes, reaching all, and so self-complete as ever to be speechless and calm', the Upaniṣad proceeds to identify it with the individual soul thus: 'This is my Self within the heart, smaller than a rice grain, or a barley corn, or a mustard seed, or a grain of millet, or the kernel of a grain of millet; this is my Self within the heart, greater than the earth, greater than the mid-region, greater than heaven, greater than all these worlds. This is Brahman.'

The *saṁvarga-vidyā* (IV.3) characterizes the air (*vāyu*) among the cosmic phenomena as the end of all, and the breath (*prāṇa*) in the individual as the end of all, with a view to show that these two are but different expressions of the same Principle, Brahman.

In the *ṣoḍaśakalā-vidyā* (IV.4-9), Satyakāma is given the teaching about the sixteen parts of Brahman. Vāyu, in the form of a bull, declares to him that the four regional quarters are parts of the Absolute. Agni (Fire) identifies earth, interspace, heaven, and ocean as parts of Brahman. The Sun, in the guise of a flamingo, describes the third quarter of Brahman as fire, sun, moon, and lightning. Lastly, Prāṇa, in the form of a water-bird, teaches that breath, eye, ear, and mind are the last quarter of Brahman. The four supernormal teachers dwell on the different aspects of the Absolute, as the luminous (*prakāśavat*), as the endless (*anantavat*), as full of light (*jyotiṣmat*), and as the support (*āyatanavat*).

In the *Upakosala-vidyā* (IV.10-15), a similar instruction is given to Upakosala. Having spent a long term in the house of his teacher, Satyakāma, without receiving any formal instruction, Upakosala goes on a fast, when

the sacred fires, which he has tended with diligence and care, take pity on him and undertake to teach him. He is told first that 'Breath is Brahman, *ka* (pleasure) is Brahman, *kha* (ether) is Brahman', and then Brahman is identified with earth, fire, food, and the sun ; water, the quarters, stars, and the moon ; and breath, ether, heaven, and lightning. The teacher, Satyakāma, on learning about what the fires had taught Upakosala, characterizes the teaching as but partial and as concerning the worlds, and proceeds to impart to his pupil the true doctrine by knowing which evil deed will not cling to one, as water does not stick to a lotus leaf. The final teaching is: 'The Person that is seen in the eye, that is the Self. This is the immortal, the fearless ; this is Brahman.'

The doctrine of the cosmic Self is taught in several other stories too. One of them tells us of five householders who, along with Uddālaka, a learned preceptor, go to King Aśvapati, seeking knowledge of the Self. The king, like a good teacher, first elicits from them their views of the Self. They identify the Self variously with heaven, the sun, air, ether, water, and earth. Aśvapati remarks that these, heaven etc., are parts of the cosmic Self (Vaiśvānara Ātman) ; that the Self should not be thought of as many ; and that it is identical with oneself (V.11-18).

The most important episode in the *Chāndogya* is that in which Uddālaka teaches his son, Śvetaketu, the truth of the non-difference of the individual soul from Brahman. This we shall explain a little later. What is relevant, however, to the present context from that teaching is Uddālaka's account of the evolution of the world from the one Reality. The Sat (Reality) alone was this in the beginning, one only, without a second. It thought, 'May I be many, may I grow forth' ; and it sent forth fire, from which the other orders of creation appeared in sequence. Referring to this passage, Rāmānuja observes thus: The *Chāndogya* text beginning with the words 'Reality alone was this in the beginning' and ending with the words 'it sent forth fire' declares that the one principle denoted as 'Reality' is the material and instrumental cause of the universe. The expression 'Reality alone was this in the beginning, one only' establishes that one Reality as the material cause of all things. The expression 'without a second' negatives the existence of a second operative cause. And the words 'it thought' etc. establish that one Reality as the cause and substance of all things that constitute the world.[11]

UPANIṢADIC COSMISM DISTINCT FROM PANTHEISM

The Upaniṣadic cosmism should be distinguished from pantheism with which it is sometimes confused. A distinction is made between two types

[11] *Śrībhāṣya* on *B.S.*, I.1.2.

of pantheism, the one which believes that all is God, and the other which thinks that God is all. If we begin with the 'all' or Nature and consider it to be absolute and designate it as God, we have pan-cosmism. If we start with the postulate that God is infinite and eternal and resolve the world in Him, we have acosmism. The former of these views is not, in the strict sense, a philosophical view. The word 'God' is used here, as it has been said, only as a fig-leaf to hide the nakedness of a type of materialism. The other variety of pantheism may be the result of either a religious belief or a philosophical view.[12] The Upaniṣadic cosmism falls, according to the critic, under the category of religious pantheism; and the Upaniṣadic acosmism will then be a philosophical pantheism.

Is the characterization of the *saprapañca* view as religious pantheism legitimate? In the first place, there is a contradiction in describing this view as a mode of acosmism, for the cosmos is not denied reality here. Waiving this initial difficulty, let us inquire whether the expression 'pantheism' is adequate at all to such a conception as the *saprapañca* view. Deussen formulates what pantheism is as follows: 'God creates the universe by transforming Himself into the universe. The latter confessedly has become God. Since it is real and also infinite, there is no room for God independently of the universe, but only within it. The terms God and universe become synonymous, and the idea of God is only retained in order not to break with tradition.'[13] While this is an accurate description of pantheism, no phase of the Upaniṣadic thought is pantheistic in this sense. Brahman is not equated with the universe, though the universe has Brahman for its sole cause. As Deussen himself admits, the Upaniṣads seek to show 'that Brahman by his transformation into the universe has forfeited nothing of the perfection of his own nature'.[14] Being immanent in the universe, Brahman is also transcendent. The *Puruṣa-sūkta* (*Ṛ.V.*, X.90) declares that all beings are only a fourth of the supreme Spirit, while the three other fourths remain immortal in heaven; that the Puruṣa has a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, and a thousand feet; and that, pervading the entire universe, he extends ten digits beyond. The Upaniṣads, likewise, teach, beyond doubt, the transcendence of Brahman. To quote only one text, the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (V.9-11) declares: 'As the one fire, entering the world, becomes corresponding in form to every form, so the one inner Self of all beings is corresponding in form to every form, and yet is outside. As the one wind, entering the world, becomes corresponding in form to every form, so the one inner Self of all beings is corresponding in form to

[12] See *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, IX. p. 609 (article on 'Pantheism').
[13] *The Philosophy of the Upanishads* (trans. by A. S. Geden. T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1906), p. 160.
[14] *Ibid.*, p. 165.

every form. As the sun, the eye of the entire world, is not sullied by the external defects of the eyes, so the one inner Self of all beings is not sullied by the misery of the world, being external to it.' Thus, it is evident that the cosmism of the Upaniṣads is not pantheism. When we speak of 'cosmism', we only mean that when we approach Brahman from the side of the cosmos, it appears to be the cause of the universe.

THE ACOSMIC VIEW IN THE UPANIṢADS

The conception of causality, however, is a limiting concept. There is no reason whatever why the investigation into causes should come to a stop at any point. The notion of a first cause is unintelligible, because it involves a contradiction. The description of Brahman as the cause of the world is a concession to our empirical habit of mind; it cannot be taken as the ultimate truth. So, in the Upaniṣads we have statements to the effect that Brahman cannot be characterized as 'this' or 'that', that it never really became the world, and that the world is only an appearance of Brahman. This is the *niṣprapañca* or acosmic view of the Upaniṣads. It is set forth mainly in a negative form, showing thereby that our empirical categories and limiting concepts are not applicable to Brahman. Sense-qualities, like sound, touch, colour, taste, and smell, and spatio-temporal distinctions, like beginning and end, above and below, do not apply to Brahman.[15] In a well-known passage, the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* (7) declares: 'Not internally conscious, not externally conscious, not conscious both-wise, not a mass of consciousness, not conscious, not non-conscious, imperceptible, not amenable to empirical usage, ungraspable, not having any identifying mark, unthinkable, unnamable, the essence of the knowledge of the one Self, that into which all phenomena get resolved, that which is tranquil, non-dual bliss—such, they hold, is the transcendent Reality.'

The Upaniṣad which teaches the *niṣprapañca* doctrine in a pre-eminent way is the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*. Yājñavalkya, who dominates the debates in the Upaniṣad, dwells on the acosmic nature of the Absolute in different contexts. Brahman cannot be defined by empirical categories. 'It is not gross, not subtle, not short, not long, not red, not adhesive, without shadow, without darkness, without air, without space, without attachment, without taste, without smell, without eyes, without ears, without speech, without mind, without light, without breath, without mouth, without measure, and without either inside or outside. It does not eat anything; nor is it eaten by anybody' (III.8.8). The absolute Spirit is imperceptible, for it is never perceived; undecaying, for it never decays; unattached, for it is never attached; it is unfettered; it never feels pain and never suffers injury.

[15] See *Ka. U.*, III.15.

It can be only indicated as 'not this, not that' (III.9.26). This does not mean that Brahman is nothing, nor that it is unknown. It cannot be seen, for it is the seer, or rather sight. Similarly, it cannot be heard, thought, or known. Other than it there is no seer, thinker, or knower (III.8.11). The Brahman or Self which is of the nature of pure consciousness is never lost. There is nothing which it can see, for there is no other than it. Where there is something else, as it were, there one may see something, one may smell something, one may taste something, one may hear something, one may think something, one may touch something, or one may know something. But where there is no duality, all such empirical usage becomes void of meaning. The Self is one without a second (IV.3.23-31).

If Brahman is the sole reality, the world of plurality cannot be ultimately real. The plurality that is experienced must be illusory. It is the result of *māyā* or *avidyā*. Though the doctrine of Māyā is not taught in the Upaniṣads in the elaborate form in which it is expounded in later Vedānta, the roots of the doctrine can be clearly traced there. It is wrong therefore to regard the doctrine as a later graft on the Upaniṣadic philosophy. When, for instance, Yājñavalkya says that, where there is duality *as it were* (*iva*), one sees another etc., he means that duality is not real. Even in the *Chāndogya*, which teaches primarily the cosmic view, the modifications that constitute the world are characterized as mere names, verbal expressions (*vācārambhaṇam, nāmadheyam*—VI.1.4-6). Even as early as the *Ṛg-Veda*, we find the term '*māyā*' employed in the sense of illusion or appearance (VI.47.18). In the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (IV.10), Prakṛti is defined as *māyā* and the Lord (Maheśvara) is described as the *māyin* (wielder of *māyā*). The term '*avidyā*', which is an equivalent of *māyā*, occurs in many an Upaniṣadic text in precisely the same sense in which it is used in Advaita Vedānta. It is nescience that is responsible for the appearance of plurality. The Absolute is in no way altered by this appearance. The immutable Reality is ever the same.

UPANIṢADIC ACOSMISM IS NOT PANTHEISM OR IDEALISM

It is the Upaniṣadic acosmism, even more than the cosmism, that has often been characterized by critics as pantheistic. After observing that 'most imposing of all the systems of pantheism which can claim a religious origin is the Brāhmaṇic in India', A. E. Garvie remarks: 'This Indian pantheism was a movement of religious thought away from the popular polytheism; and yet here, as elsewhere, pantheism was ever ready to compromise with polytheism. . . . Brahman becomes the sole reality, and yet a place is found for the multitude of gods as manifestations of Brahman.'[16] A. Barth

[16] *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, IX. p. 610.

believes 'that the tone and tendency of Indian conviction and belief are as a whole pantheistic.'[17] Apart from the fact that there is no real polytheism in Indian thought, and therefore no question of a compromise with polytheism, the critics may be asked on what grounds they regard the Upaniṣadic acosmism as pantheism. A. S. Geden says that the pantheistic strain of thought of India is of a type differing from the European, and that it has sometimes been described as idealistic pantheism.[18] But the fundamental question is whether it is not confusing to apply the term 'pantheism' to a view which asserts the universe to be fundamentally and altogether unreal, and to have no existence apart from Brahman. Pantheism, in its legitimate sense, is 'the doctrine that God and the universe are identical. It thus is synonymous with the doctrine of *immanence*, and is opposed to the *transcendence* view of Deity'.[19] If this be pantheism, as undoubtedly it is, it is incorrect to class the *niṣprapañca* view under it.

Even to say that the Upaniṣadic view is 'idealistic' seems to us to be wrong. Though it is true that, among the western schools of philosophy, the view of absolute idealism comes closest to the Upaniṣadic non-dualism, there are significant differences between the two that do not warrant the application of the same term to both. Of all the absolute idealists, Bradley is said to come nearest to Śaṅkara. But, what is Bradley's view of Reality? In the first place, Reality, according to him, is a systematic whole which owns its appearances in a harmonious manner. He says that 'everything, which appears, is somehow real in such a way as to be self-consistent. The character of the real is to possess everything phenomenal in a harmonious form'.[20] Secondly, the content of Bradley's Absolute is sentient experience. 'Sentient experience, in short, is reality, and what is not this is not real. We may say, in other words, that there is no being or fact outside of that which is commonly called psychical existence.'[21] Now, on both these points relating to the nature of the Absolute, the view of Advaita is different from that of Bradley. The non-dual and distinctionless Brahman is not a synthesis of differences or a whole of parts; it is not an identity-in-difference. It is not to be identified with psychical existence either. The material of the Bradleian Absolute consists of feeling, thought, and volition. But this is not true of the Upaniṣadic Brahman. And so, it would seem that nothing much is gained for clarity of thought by the description of the non-dualist doctrine as a form of idealism.

[17] *Ibid.*, IX. p. 617. [18] *Ibid.*, IX. p. 618.
[19] See Hunter Mead, *Types and Problems of Philosophy* (Henry Holt & Co., New York, 1946), p. 388.
[20] *Appearance and Reality*, p. 140. [21] *Ibid.*, p. 144.

HARMONIZATION OF COSMISM AND ACOSMISM

The two forms in which the Upaniṣads teach Brahman as *saprapañca* and *niṣprapañca* are not incompatible, if they are regarded as views of the same Reality *sub specie temporis* and *sub specie aeternitatis* respectively. Even otherwise, it is not difficult to see that, according to both of them, Brahman is to be distinguished from the phenomenal world of names and forms. And also, the so-called individual soul is identical *in essence* with the supreme Self. The doctrine of identity is taught in the Upaniṣads over and over again. The most famous of these contexts is the one in which Uddālaka instructs his son Śvetaketu in Brahman lore.[22] The knowledge of which the father speaks to his son is not of the particular perishing things; it is a knowledge whereby what is not heard becomes heard, what is not thought of becomes thought of, what is not known becomes known. The Self or Brahman is the foundation of all knowledge. By knowing it everything becomes known, as by knowing one piece of clay all that is made of clay is known, as by knowing one nugget of gold all that is made of gold is known, and as by knowing a pair of nail-scissors all that is made of iron is known. The modifications are but names; the Reality is the same. The many change and pass; the One remains.

Uddālaka regards this One as the basis of all existence, the source of all being. The Sat alone was in the beginning, one only, without a second. From it fire issued forth; from fire water emerged; and from water food. These three are the rudiments of the cosmos. 'Having manifested them, the Sat entered into them and unfolded names and forms (*nāma-rūpa*) by a process of triplication (*trivṛtkaraṇa*), i.e. by a combination of the three elements in different proportions. All things and beings are made of these elements, including mind, breath, and speech. In sleep all these are resolved, and one returns to the Sat, the real Self, one becomes oneself. The Sat is the ground of all beings; they have the Sat as their home, as their support. Having shown in this manner that the one Reality is the source of all existence, Uddālaka declares to his son, 'It is the Self; and That thou art, O Śvetaketu'. This declaration of non-difference is repeated nine times, thereby indicating that it constitutes the central teaching of the Upaniṣad. In the non-dual Self there is no difference whatsoever. What we in our ignorance designate as the individual is none other than the universal Self.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE IDENTITY OF SELF AND BRAHMAN

Here it is necessary to guard ourselves against the danger of misinterpreting the identity doctrine as a form of subjectivism. Josiah Royce, who

[22] *Chā. U.*, VI.

gives an account of the teaching of Uddālaka in his Gifford Lectures, makes the mistake of so interpreting the doctrine. This is what he says: 'The axiom which our European idealists often state in the form: *no object without a subject*, is therefore always, in one shape or another, upon the Hindu's lips. He states it less technically, but he holds it all the more intuitively. The world is one—why? *Because I feel it as one.* What then is its oneness? *My own oneness.* And who am I? I am Brahman, I myself, in my inmost heart, in my Soul, am the world-principle, the All. In this form the Hindu's monism becomes at once a subjective idealism.'[23] It will not be difficult to show how every one of Royce's deductions is wrong. If there is no object without subject, there is no subject without object either. The subject-object relation belongs to the phenomenal order. If Brahman is the reality of the subject, it is the reality of the object as well. If the student is taught that the Self is the knower, it is only to facilitate his understanding the nature of Reality. Strictly speaking, the Self is neither the knower nor the known object; it is knowledge *per se*, *prajñāna*, or simply *jña*. That such Reality is one or non-dual does not depend upon my feeling so, nor on my own oneness. If by 'I' or 'me' is meant the empirical ego, then, clearly I am *not* Brahman. The finite, fickle, and precarious ego cannot be the abiding Reality which is Brahman. The mere words 'That thou art' or 'I am Brahman' will not give one the intended meaning. One must bear in mind the context in which such a doctrine is taught. It is not the psychical stuff of Śvetaketu that is declared to be Brahman by Uddālaka, but the real Self which knows no distinctions. As it has been observed, 'It is true that the world has emerged from the One and that that One is Śvetaketu's Self; yet it is not his private self that can explain the universe, but his self only in so far as it is one with Sat or the universal Self. "I live; yet not I, but God liveth in me".'[24]

KARMA, SAṀSĀRA, AND MOKṢA

So far we have been dealing with the metaphysical basis of Indian culture as it could be gathered from the Vedas and the Upaniṣads. Let us now turn to some of the important doctrines that follow as corollaries from the basic Indian view of Reality as the supreme Spirit which is both immanent in the world and transcending it. The most widely known, as also much misunderstood doctrine is that of Karma and transmigration.

[23] *The World and the Individual—First Series* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1904), p. 158. See also J. N. Farquhar, *An Outline of the Religious Literature of India*, p. 59: 'In the old Upaniṣads, when the idea of the Ātman is reached by a rigorous process of abstraction, the result is an idealistic conception, a mind which is a subject without an object, a knower that is unknowable.

[24] See M. Hiriyanna, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

Saṁsāra is the Sanskrit term for transmigration or metempsychosis. It means the 'flow' of life from beyond birth to beyond death. If Brahman is the eternal Reality, and if we are non-different from it, birth cannot be our beginning, nor death our end. The soul is eternal, though it appears to be born and to die. Birth and death relate to the integration and disintegration respectively of the elements that compose the body. These are changes that affect the body, like growth and decay. It is because the soul identifies itself with the body, on account of ignorance, that it suffers and becomes a victim of *saṁsāra*.

The kind of birth the soul takes and the type of enjoyment that falls to its lot are determined by its own past. The term '*karma*' means work and the result of work. And the law of Karma simply states that the sphere of morality is an ordered realm, and is the moral equivalent of the physical law of causality. 'As ye sow, so ye reap.' Our present has issued out of our past, and our future will depend on our present. As the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* puts it: 'As is a man's desire, such is his resolve; as is his resolve, such is the action he performs; what action he performs, that he procures for himself' (IV.4.5). Thus, the twin doctrines of *saṁsāra* and Karma relate to the empirical order. While the concept of *saṁsāra* tells us that this order involves constant change, the law of Karma gives us the principle governing the course of change.

Critics of Indian culture have urged that, under the oppressive idea of repeated births and deaths, the Indian mentality has developed a pessimistic outlook, which is only reinforced by the doctrine of Karma with its inescapable and inexorable fatalism. 'Transmigration, or metempsychosis, is the great bugbear—the terrible nightmare and daymare—of Indian philosophers and metaphysicians', observes Monier Williams. 'All their efforts', he adds, 'are directed to the getting rid of this oppressive scare. . . . The question is not, What is the truth? The one engrossing problem is, How is man to break this iron chain of repeated existences?'[25] It is true that the Indian philosopher's goal is freedom from *saṁsāra*. At the same time, it is not true to say that he looks upon transmigration as a bugbear. On the contrary, he regards it, especially birth as a human being, as an opportunity for realizing perfection. A life lived in utter forgetfulness of the Spirit is vain indeed. But a life that strives to reach out towards perfection is a glorious one. The saints who adopted a theistic view and an attitude of intense devotion to God even proclaimed that they would welcome any kind of birth, if only they could be in living contact with

[25] *Brahmanism and Hinduism* (John Murray, London, 1891), p. 41.

the Divine.[24] Thus transmigration has release for its end; *mokṣāyate saṁsāraḥ*.

Again, it is wrong to identify the doctrine of Karma with fatalism. Karma is not an external destiny driving man to his doom, nor a blind mechanical framework from which there is no escape. All that the law of Karma implies is that our present enjoyments are the result of our past actions. So far as our future is concerned, we are relatively free to fashion it after our heart's desire. It is not a blind law that operates in the universe. The Veda describes the gods as the protectors of the law (*gopā ṛtasya*), and the Upaniṣad declares that God presides over the law (*karmādhyakṣaḥ*). And, what is important for us to note is that freedom from the cycle of Karma is not only possible, but is our ultimate goal and destiny.

Mokṣa or spiritual freedom, which is the final goal of man, is not a post-mortem experience in a world beyond. It is realizable *here* and *now*. According to the doctrine of non-duality, one need not wait till the decease of the body for the attainment of *mokṣa*. *Mokṣa* is the eternal nature of the Self, and not a spatio-temporal state. What prevents the soul from realizing it is its own ignorance or *ajñāna*. When ignorance is dispelled through wisdom of the nature of the Self, one attains release, even though the physical body may continue to appear for a while. This is known as the doctrine of *jīvan-mukti*, release while being embodied. Although the theistic schools of thought do not subscribe to the idea of *jīvan-mukti*, for them, too, the state of enlightenment is attainable in this life, which consists in an exalted mode of existence, freed from the shackles of egoity and ignorance. The goal, for both the views, is marked by sorrowlessness and peace, unobstructed intelligence, and unalloyed bliss.

DIFFERENT METHODS OF ATTAINING MOKṢA

The root-cause of bondage is ignorance (*avidyā*); and ignorance binds the soul through the generation of desire (*kāma*) and action (*karma*) to fulfil it. Oblivious of its identity with Brahman, the soul identifies itself with a psycho-physical organism, desires finite ends, works for them, and enjoys or suffers in consequence. The course of discipline that is prescribed in the several schools of Indian thought aims at the removal of the factors that constitute bondage. *Karma* or work binds the soul by bringing in its reward. Birth itself is due to *karma*. The sting in *karma*, however, is not activity as such, but the object thereof. Each act is prompted by a particular motive, and it is the motive that governs its nature. And because an act

[24] Śaṅkara in his *Śivānandalaharī* says: 'Let me be born as a man or god, an animal or a tree, a gnat, a worm, or a bird; if my heart is ever sporting on the waves of extreme bliss of contemplation of Thy lotus feet, then, what do I care for any kind of body.' *The Bhāgavata* (XI.14.14) and the *Mukundamālā Stotra* of Kulaśekhara express similar ideas.

is undertaken for the definite purpose of enjoying its result, the result affects the soul. If actions could be performed without a desire for the personal enjoyment of their results, then they would be devoid of their sting; and *karma* would become Karma-yoga. Actions would even then lead to their results; but these would be mere consequences and not *ends*, and so would leave the soul unaffected. This doctrine is set forth in great detail in the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, as also the other phases of the discipline. It is taught in the Upaniṣads too, especially in the *Īśa* (1-2), where it is said: 'Through the renunciation of that (the changing world) mayest thou enjoy; covetest not anyone's riches. Ever performing works here one may wish to live a hundred years. In this way, not otherwise, to thee, that art a man, the deed adheres not.' Thus, the object of Karma-yoga is to wean man away from his selfishness.

But, then, it may be asked, 'Is it possible to work without desire? *Kāma* (desire) is the spring of *karma*; *niṣkāma-karma* (desireless action) is a contradiction in terms'. The answer to this question is provided by the next aspect of the spiritual discipline, viz. Bhakti-yoga or the path of devotion. It is true that motiveless action is impossible. But instead of directing the different actions towards finite ends, let them have one and the same end, viz. God-realization or Self-realization. Let *kāma* be transmuted into *prema*, devotion to God or love of an ideal. *Karma* (work) would then become *kaiṅkarya* (worship).

There is another method of attaining release from bondage. *Avidyā* obscures the real Self and projects the illusory universe. It is by tearing down this last veil that the soul attains release. Jñāna-yoga is the path of Self-knowledge which effects the final deliverance. It consists of three stages: *śravaṇa* or study of the Vedānta texts under a competent guide, *manana* or reflection on what the texts teach, and *nididhyāsana* or continued meditation on their purport. When the obstacles have been removed, the darkness of ignorance is dispelled by the light of Self-knowledge.

ALL PATHS LEAD TO THE SAME GOAL

This brings us to the last point we would wish to discuss, and that relates to the pervasive character of Indian culture. Students of Hinduism must be familiar with the doctrine 'All paths lead to the same goal'. There is no important scripture of the Hindus which does not teach that there are several pathways to God. Here is the recent testimony of Sri Ramakrishna: 'I have practised all religions—Hinduism, Islam, Christianity—and I have also followed the paths of the different Hindu sects. I have found that it is the same God toward whom all are directing their steps, though along different paths. You must try all beliefs and

traverse all different ways once. Wherever I look, I see men quarrelling in the name of religion—Hindus, Mohammedans, Brahmos, Vaiṣṇavas, and the rest. But they never reflect that He who is called Kṛṣṇa is also called Śiva, and bears the name of Primal Energy (Śakti), Jesus, and Allah as well—the same Rāma with a thousand names. A lake has several *ghāṭs*. At one, the Hindus take water in pitchers and call it "*jal*"; at another, the Mussalmans take water in leather bags and call it "*pāni*". At a third, the Christians call it "water". Can we imagine that it is not "*jal*", but only "*pāni*" or "water"? How ridiculous! The substance is one under different names, and everyone is seeking the same substance; only climate, temperament, and name create differences. Let each man follow his own path. If he sincerely and ardently wishes to know God, peace be unto him! He will surely realize Him.'[27]

SPIRIT OF INDIAN CULTURE

Like the other phases of Indian culture, the tolerant spirit of Hinduism too has been misunderstood. It has been argued that to the Hindu all levels of religious experience are equal, that Hinduism is a medley of a variety of religious attitudes from animism and fetishism to monotheism and monism, and that, when superstition and sanity are put together and are regarded as equally acceptable, it is likely that the former will smother the latter and come out triumphant in the end. This, however, is not true of the Hindu conception of respect for all religions. Hinduism does recognize the different grades of religious experience, and the need for spiritual evolution from the lower forms of worship to the higher ones. But, at the same time, it believes that it is not necessary to change the label of one's faith in order to achieve progress in inward life. True conversion is not transverse from one formal faith to another, but vertical from the less to more of spirituality. The Indian genius has always stood for the ideal of charity in spirit and hospitality of mind. Where there is quarrel, there is no understanding; where there is no understanding, there is no truth. Therefore it is that Indian culture has sought to be pervasive of all aspects of the pilgrim's journey to Truth. Regimentation of spirit is undesirable. The purpose of a culture or religion should be to let the spirit grow in freedom, and not to strangle it in a strait-jacket. The greatest men of India have been exemplars of the gospel of spiritual freedom. That India has made it possible for such men to appear in every age is the glory of her ancient and yet living culture.

[27] See *Ramakrishna: Prophet of New India* (Harper & Bros., New York, 1948), p. 29.

11

THE VEDAS AND THEIR RELIGIOUS TEACHINGS

THE Hindus trace the original source of their cultural life to the Vedas which they hold to be divine truths revealed from time to time to the *ṛṣis* (seers) in their supra-normal consciousness. Their religion, philosophy, ritualistic practices, civic conduct, and even social relations are guided by certain codes which are known as Smṛtis, but all of them are based upon the sacred sanction of Vedic authority. Even the Itihāsas and Purāṇas are to be read as commentaries on the sacred Vedas. Manu, the greatest lawgiver of India, has explicitly stated that these should be considered as an elaboration of the Vedas. It is a recognized rule of procedure that whenever there seems to be a difference between the Śruti (the Vedas) and the Smṛti, the Śruti has to be upheld as the supreme authority and the Smṛti has to be interpreted in consonance with it. No school of philosophy will be recognized as orthodox, if it is not supported by the authority of the Vedas. The whole life of a Hindu, from conception up to the last funeral rite, has to be sanctified by the recitation of Vedic *mantras* (sacred texts). From these facts it may easily be conceived how profound has been the influence of the Vedas upon this great and most ancient of the civilized nations of the world.

TRADITIONAL VIEW OF THE VEDAS

The word '*veda*' literally means knowledge and supreme knowledge too. But secondarily it is applied to the Vedic literature, comprising Saṁhitās, Brāhmaṇas, Āraṇyakas, and Upaniṣads, books which are considered to be direct revelations from God, embodying the supreme Truth that could not be gained by any effort of the human mind. So they are regarded as *apauruṣeya*, i.e. not of human origin. The Vedas are called Śruti, either because they were directly heard from God, or because the traditional method of studying and getting them by heart is by hearing them recited by the preceptor. The great Sāyaṇācārya has defined Veda in the very beginning of his commentary on the *Black Yajur-Veda* as 'a book which reveals the knowledge of supernatural methods (*alaukika upāya*) for the achievement of the desired object and avoidance of the undesirable'.

According to the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, the original Veda, first revealed by God to the *ṛṣis*, consisted of one hundred thousand verses, and had four divisions. With the efflux of time these divisions got mixed up and many portions of the Vedas fell into obscurity. So, in the beginning of the Dvāpara Age, Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana resuscitated the Vedic study and classified

the work according to the four ancient divisions of *Ṛc*, *Yajus*, *Sāman*, and *Atharvan*. In order to perpetuate the study of the Vedas in a proper form, he taught them to his four principal disciples. He gave the *Ṛg-Veda* to Paila, *Yajur-Veda* to Vaiśampāyana, *Sāma-Veda* to Jaimini, and *Atharva-Veda* to Sumanta. As he reclassified the Vedas, he became renowned by the name of Veda-Vyāsa, i.e. classifier of the Vedas. This tradition is so strong among the Hindu scholars that it cannot but be accepted as having some historical basis.

THE VEDIC LITERATURE

The Vedic scriptures, broadly speaking, comprise four great works, viz. *Ṛg-Veda, Yajur-Veda, Sāma-Veda*, and *Atharva-Veda*. Each of these again has three main divisions, viz. the Saṁhitās or Mantras, the Brāhmaṇas, and the Āraṇyakas. According to the Vedic etymologist Yāska, there are only two divisions of the Vedas, i.e. the Saṁhitās and the Brāhmaṇas, the Āraṇyakas forming only a part of the latter; this is the view also of Āpastamba, one of the most reputed lawgivers of ancient India. The famous Upaniṣads are mostly different chapters of the Āraṇyakas. Some scholars include in the Vedic literature a body of *sūtras* (aphorisms) known as Kalpa-Sūtras. The Saṁhitās and Brāhmaṇas are loosely designated as *karma-kāṇḍa* (the portion pertaining to rituals), the Āraṇyakas as *upāsanā-kāṇḍa* (the portion relating to meditation), and the Upaniṣads as *jñāna-kāṇḍa* (the portion dealing with supreme knowledge).

There are four principal Saṁhitās, viz. *Ṛg-Veda Saṁhitā*; *Yajur-Veda Saṁhitā*, comprising *Taittirīya Saṁhitā* or *Black Yajur-Veda* and *Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā* or *White Yajur-Veda*; *Sāma-Veda Saṁhitā*; and *Atharva-Veda Saṁhitā*. Besides these, there are three other Saṁhitās of lesser importance, viz. the *Kāṭhaka, Kapiṣṭhala-Kaṭha*, and *Maitrāyaṇī Saṁhitās* of the *Black Yajur-Veda*. These are collections of sacred hymns in verse of different metres, and are mostly addressed in prayer to various gods and goddesses. They are meant to be recited in different ritualistic performances, and often express the loftiest sentiments that man can feel for his Deity. But as the mere recitation of these sacred texts is supposed to have a spiritual value, their application is mostly in relation to some ritual or sacrifice (*yajña*). Hence they are included in the *karma-kāṇḍa*.

The Brāhmaṇas are mostly in prose, containing detailed descriptions of the sacrificial rites and the modes of their performance. They contain, according to the great Vedic commentator Sāyaṇa, eight classes of topics, viz. *itihāsa, purāṇa, vidyā, upaniṣad, śloka, sūtra, vyākhyāna*, and *anuvyākhyāna*, i.e. history, old stories, esoteric knowledge about meditation, supreme knowledge, verses, aphorisms, explanations, and elaborations.

Each of the Vedas possesses one or more Brāhmaṇas. The *Ṛg-Veda* has two, viz. the *Aitareya* and the *Kauṣītaki* or *Śāṅkhāyana*; to the *Sāma-Veda* belong the *Tāṇḍya* or *Pañcaviṁśa*, the *Ṣaḍviṁśa* which includes *Adbhuta*, *Jaiminīya* or *Talavakāra*, *Śāṭyāyana*, *Ārṣeya*, and *Vaṁśa*; the *Black Yajur-Veda* has the *Taittirīya*, which is but a continuation of the *Taittirīya Saṁhitā*, while the *White Yajur-Veda* has the *Śatapatha* in two recensions, viz. the *Kāṇva* and *Mādhyandina*; the *Atharva-Veda* has the *Gopatha*.

The Āraṇyakas, although considered part of the Brāhmaṇas, as Yāska would divide Vedic literature only into two groups, the Mantras and the Brāhmaṇas, are, for all practical purposes, quite independent of the Brāhmaṇas, excepting perhaps the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* of the *Black Yajur-Veda*, which forms the latter part of the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa*. The Upaniṣads, as already said, are mostly chapters of these Āraṇyakas, excepting the *Īśa*, which forms the fortieth and last chapter of the *Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā* (*White Yajur-Veda*). Many Āraṇyakas, belonging to the different Vedas, are now lost. In most cases only the Upaniṣadic chapters of these wonderful books have survived the onslaught of time. Though at present there are about two hundred and fifty Upaniṣads claiming to belong to one or the other of the Vedas, the oldest known commentator of the Upaniṣads, Śaṅkarācārya, has recognized only sixteen of them to be authentic and authoritative. Of these, *Aitareya* and *Kauṣītaki* belong to the *Ṛg-Veda*; *Kaṭha*, *Taittirīya*, *Kaivalya*, *Śvetāśvatara*, and *Nārāyaṇa* to the *Black Yajur-Veda*; *Īśa*, *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, and *Jābāla* to the *White Yajur-Veda*; *Kena* and *Chāndogya* to the *Sāma-Veda*; and *Praśna*, *Muṇḍaka*, *Māṇḍūkya*, and *Nṛsiṁhatāpanī* to the *Atharva-Veda*.

There is a consensus of opinion among modern scholars that the *Ṛg-Veda Saṁhitā* is the most ancient record of the religious thoughts of mankind, or at any rate of the Indo-Aryans. The orthodox Hindus also hold that it stands first among the Vedic revelations, because wherever mention is made of the Vedic scriptures, the name of the *Ṛg-Veda* comes first. From internal evidence also we notice that the other Saṁhitās are more or less enlargements of certain portions of the *Ṛg-Veda*. Both the *Yajur-Veda* and the *Sāma-Veda* contain considerable portions of the *Ṛg-Veda* with slight additions and alterations. And even the religious import of the other Vedas is only a reflex of what is already contained in the hymns of the *Ṛg-Veda*. The *Atharva-Veda*, which is considered to be the last of the Vedas, also contains many *mantras* of the *Ṛg-Veda*. The very word '*trayī*', which is commonly used to signify the Vedic scriptures, denotes that originally the Vedas were only three in number and that the *Atharva-Veda* was a later addition. Pāṇini, the greatest grammarian of India, also supports this view when he describes the Vedas as three. It is

also a significant fact of Hindu society that while the great bulk of Brāhmaṇas belong to one or the other of the first three Vedas, the Atharva-Vedic Brāhmaṇas are few and far between at present in India.

KARMA-KĀṆḌA AND JÑĀNA-KĀṆḌA

These four Saṁhitās are generally used for recitation during the performance of a sacrifice like *soma-yāga* by the four principal priests who sit on the four sides of the sacrificial altar. *Brahman*, the main priest who presides over the entire sacrificial function, sits on the northern side of the altar, on his right side sits the priest called *udgātṛ*, on his left side the priest called *hotṛ*, and on the side opposite to him the priest named *adhvaryu*. *Brahman* performs his function by reciting the *Atharva-Veda*; *hotṛ*, the *Ṛg-Veda*; *udgātṛ*, the *Sāma-Veda*; and *adhvaryu* pours oblations into the sacrificial fire by reciting the *mantras* of the *Yajur-Veda*. Besides these, the various other *mantras* belonging to different Saṁhitās are recited on different occasions either to sanctify persons or things or the departed spirits of the dead. Certain texts of the *Yajur-Veda* and the *Atharva-Veda* are concerned with black magic.

These are, in short, the different applications of the Saṁhitās or the Mantra portion of the Vedas. Therefore they are considered parts of rituals belonging to the *karma-kāṇḍa*. And the notion was so deep-rooted and general among the ancients in India that a particular school of Vedic scholars, known as the Mīmāṁsakas, holds the view, as Jaimini has codified it in his aphorisms, that 'the main purpose of the Vedas is to denote some *karma* or rite, and therefore all those portions which do not explicitly speak of rituals should be considered as redundant or figurative'. But there is still another school of Vedic scholars who hold that the main purpose of the Vedas is twofold, namely, the attainment of mundane welfare including heavenly enjoyments (*abhyudaya*) and the realization of the supreme spiritual beatitude (*niḥśreyasa*); whereas the *karma-kāṇḍa* and the *upāsanā-kāṇḍa* speak of the former attainments, the Upaniṣads or the Vedānta (the final part of the Vedas) deal principally with the knowledge of the transcendental Reality, the realization of which alone can dispel the ignorance that subjects man to bondage of matter. It may be noted here that these two principal divisions of Vedic scriptures are generally accepted by all Hindu scholars, both ancient and modern. And all the different orthodox systems of philosophy as well as the various ritualistic observances that sprang up from time to time within the fold of orthodox Hinduism, known as Sanātana Dharma, own allegiance to one or the other portion of the Vedas in order to show their authenticity and thus gain a divine sanction, as it were.

But it becomes clear from the contents of both the Saṁhitās and the Brāhmaṇas that this division into the *karma-kāṇḍa* and *jñāna-kāṇḍa* is rather loose and artificial, although much emphasis has been laid upon the rule of exegesis which asserts that the real meaning of a particular chapter of Vedic text should be determined by noting the trend of its introduction and conclusion as well as by the constant repetition of the theme in between. This, according to the orthodox commentators, should settle to which *kāṇḍa* a particular text belongs. Thus the *Īśa Upaniṣad* occurring in the *Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā*, the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* forming the seventeenth chapter of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* consisting of the last eight chapters of the *Mantra Brāhmaṇa*, and the *Kena Upaniṣad* covering chapters 135 to 145 of the *Talavakāra-Brāhmaṇa* are all considered Upaniṣads, i.e. within the *jñāna-kāṇḍa*, in spite of their being placed right in the midst of the Saṁhitās and Brāhmaṇas. Sometimes we notice texts interspersed throughout the Brāhmaṇa and Saṁhitā literature, which express philosophical and religious thoughts of an exceedingly exalted type, quite on a par with those of any text of the Upaniṣads. For instance, we have in the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa*, 'Agni is fixed in speech, speech in the heart, the heart in me, myself in the immortal, the immortal in Brahman' (III.10.8.4.), and so on. Here we notice the wonderful synthesis of the physical world with the individual soul and the cosmic soul. Similarly, there are numerous texts in the Saṁhitās themselves which sound a transcendental note and are of high spiritual value.

EVOLUTION OF GODS

The Indo-Aryans were placed in the midst of the grandeur and sublimity of nature. The towering snow-peaks of the Himalayas, vast green meadows, gigantic rivers, boundless seas encircling the land on three sides, the ineffable splendour of the seasons—all produced an abiding effect upon them. Nurtured amid such environments, the Aryan in India must have been developing, from a very early period, a poetic and spiritual temperament and a deep introspective mind which separated him from the rest of the world. In the pre-Vedic period his poetic temperament must have been deeply stirred by some of the grand aspects of nature, and in his childlike simplicity he began to feel in these outstanding natural phenomena expressions and emblems of some spiritual beings and offered worship unto them with awe and reverence. Mitra, the Sun; Varuṇa, the god of the night or blue sky; Dyu and Pṛthivī, the Sky and the Earth; and Agni or Fire—all these are pre-Vedic deities who were worshipped with simple or complex rites from the most ancient days of Aryan history.

ADITI—MOTHER OF GODS

In the *Ṛg-Veda* we find a wonderful process of sublimation of all those pre-Vedic gods. The Vedic sage, while contemplating upon the true significance of Dyu and Pṛthivī, caught a glimpse of the Infinite, and he called it Aditi. She is considered the mother of all other gods, the Ādityas. Max Müller says: 'Aditi, an ancient god or goddess, is in reality the earliest name invented to express the Infinite; not the Infinite as the result of a long process of abstract reasoning, but the visible Infinite, visible by the naked eye, the endless expanse, beyond the earth, beyond the clouds, beyond the sky.'[1] The root meaning of the word '*aditi*' is unbroken, indivisible, or infinite. Yāska describes Aditi as 'mother of gods'. It is very significant that the Vedic bards could intuitively understand the one indivisible, immanent Principle even in that early period of Ṛg-Vedic age, and could feel its existence not only as a reality, but also as the progenitor of all other spiritual entities controlling this inscrutable physical universe around us, which we loosely call nature. Though there are not many hymns in the *Ṛg-Veda* dedicated to this 'mother of gods', still the names 'Aditi' and 'Ādityas' are often met with in all the Vedic texts. In one place, we find the following pronouncement: 'Aditi is the celestial sphere; Aditi is the intermediary space; Aditi is the mother, the father, the son; Aditi is all gods, the five classes of beings, the created, and is again the cause of creation.'[2] And on the strength of this name and its supposed connection with the origin of gods, grand legends were manufactured subsequently in the Paurāṇic age.

GODS OF THE THREE PLANES

Next, we notice that the *ṛṣis* of the *Ṛg-Veda* looked upon the universe as possessed of three different strata or planes of existence: The topmost plane is called *dyuloka* or celestial sphere; next comes the *antarikṣaloka*, the sphere of intermediary space; the third is the *bhūrloka* or the terrestrial sphere. In these spheres there are three presiding deities: Savitṛ or Sūrya (Sun) is the god of the celestial world; Indra or Vāyu (Air), is the god of the intermediary space; and Agni (Fire) is the god of the terrestrial region. These three gods again were multiplied into thirty-three, there being eleven in each sphere.[3] There are numerous passages in the *Ṛg-Veda* as well as in the other Vedas indicating the existence of these thirty-three gods. According to the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (IV.5.7.2), they consist of the eight Vasus, the eleven Rudras, the twelve

[1] *Ṛg-Veda* (Eng. trans.), I. p. 230.
[2] *Ṛ.V.*, I.89.10.
[3] *Taittirīya Saṁhitā*, I.4.10; *Ṛ.V.*, I.139.11.

Ādityas, Dyu (Sky), and Pṛthivī (Earth). The following are the eight Vasus: Dhava, Dhruva, Soma, Āpa, Anila, Anala, Pratyūṣa, and Prabhāsa. The twelve Ādityas are : Dhātṛ, Mitra, Aryaman, Rudra, Varuṇa, Sūrya, Bhaga, Vivasvat, Pūṣan, Savitṛ, Tvaṣṭṛ, and Viṣṇu. The same *Brāhmaṇa* (XI.6.3.8) says that the twelve Ādityas are the twelve names of the sun for the twelve months of the year. The names of the eleven Rudras are not clearly mentioned in the Vedas; but they have been variously referred to in the *Yajur-Veda* and *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka.* We get the following names of the eleven Rudras from the *Mahābhārata,* viz. Mṛgavyādha, Sarpa, Nirṛti, Ajaikapāda, Ahirbudhnya, Pinākin, Dahana, Īśvara, Kapālin, Sthāṇu, and Bhaga. These thirty-three gods were augmented again into three thousand three hundred and thirty-nine gods, as we read in the *Ṛg-Veda* (III.9.9). The great Sāyaṇa, while commenting on this passage, tells us that the original gods are only three, and these three thousand three hundred and thirty-nine gods are but enumerations of the glories of the thirty-three gods referred to above. The number was afterwards increased to thirty-three crores, meaning the countless number of deities presiding over the different aspects of both life and nature. But the original conception of the One developing into three, then into thirty-three, and subsequently into infinite aspects of the spiritual force is never lost sight of. This point has been very beautifully explained by Yājñavalkya in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (III.9.1-3).

ĀDITYAS, GODS OF THE CELESTIAL SPHERE

The Vedic sages, while contemplating upon the different aspects of nature and the workings of the mighty elemental forces, could not help conceiving the existence of individualized spiritual principles or beings behind inert matter. It has been already mentioned that Mitra was a pre-Vedic god, so also was the Sun. Of all the natural phenomena, the sun is the most engaging and dominant expression of grandeur. Moreover, since with its rising the whole living world awakes to life, and with its setting it goes back to the inactivity of sleep, the seeming death, the primitive man was not only struck by the sun's grandeur, but contemplated it as the one source of life and energy. Sun-worship was almost universal in ancient times. But in Vedic India we find the Sun-god of the primitive age transformed and sublimated. It was imagined that the celestial god, i.e. Āditya (Sun), one of the Trinity, had twelve aspects, according to the twelve months of the year, or it may be, as some hold, according to the different hours of the day. Of these the most important ones are Mitra, Varuṇa, Bhaga, Savitṛ, Viṣṇu, and Indra. In the *Ṛg-Veda* we meet with

the names of six Ādityas only. But in the other Vedas sometimes different names are given to these Sun-gods.

MITRA AND VARUṆA

Some of the most sublime hymns of the *Ṛg-Veda* are dedicated to Mitra and Varuṇa. Mitra symbolized light, and was considered to be the god of day, and Varuṇa, the deity of the deep blue sky; the root meaning of the word '*varuṇa*' is 'one that covers'. Evidently, from these ideas the Vedic sages gave a turn to their previous conceptions of these gods and considered them first as dual aspects of some potent and mysterious principle that hides its true nature from the popular gaze. If Mitra was the god of light and the day, Varuṇa became his counterpart, the god of the blue sky or night (nocturnal heaven). Here are a few specimens of the beautiful hymns addressed to these two deities: 'O Mitra and Varuṇa, you are mighty ones and increase the might (of the devotees). You hold the three celestial regions, the three shining worlds, and the three terrestrial worlds. O Mitra and Varuṇa, it is under your command that the cows give milk, the rivers give sweet waters, and the three shining gods (Agni, Vāyu, and Āditya) exist while carrying and raining waters.'[4] Another very beautiful hymn to Varuṇa occurs in the *Atharva-Veda* (IV.16): 'The mighty ruler of these worlds beholds as though from close at hand the man who thinks he acts by stealth: all this the gods perceive and know. If a man stands or walks or moves in secret, goes to his bed or rises, or what two men whisper as they sit together, King Varuṇa knows: he as the third is present. This earth, too, is King Varuṇa's possession, and the high heaven whose ends are far asunder. The loins of Varuṇa are both the oceans, and this small drop of water, too, contains him. If one should flee afar beyond the heaven, King Varuṇa would still be round about him.' In the words of Roth, we may say that there is no hymn in the whole of Vedic literature which expresses divine omnipresence and omniscience so forcibly.

SAVITṚ OR SŪRYA

The god next in importance among the Ādityas is Savitṛ. Though the commentators Yāska and Sāyaṇa try to differentiate between Savitṛ and Sūrya, calling them two different aspects of the Sun, yet in the whole of the *Ṛg-Veda* both the terms were used for one identical god. The Sun is often described as golden-handed, and is conceived to be seated in a chariot moving on one wheel to which are yoked seven horses (rays of the sun); he has been presented as the great giver of life, wealth, and energy. But just like Varuṇa, Mitra, and other gods, even the conception of Sūrya or Savitṛ

[4] *Ṛ.V.*, V.69.1-2.

was sublimated into a transcendental Principle as indicated in the following *Gāyatrī mantra* of the *Ṛg-Veda*: 'We meditate upon the glorious effulgence of that Savitṛ; may He direct our intellects towards Him' (III.62.10). In this *ṛc*, the *ṛṣi* indicates the unity of the Principle which shines as the light of the sun in heaven as well as the light of intelligence in man. This *mantra* occurs also in the *White Yajur-Veda* (IV.35) and the *Sāma-Veda* (II.8.12), and is regarded as the most sacred formula for meditation. There are ample evidences, both in the Saṁhitās and in other parts of the Vedas, that the Vedic sages treated the physical sun only as a symbol (*pratīka*) of the supreme Being whose spiritual rays of intelligence they adored.[5]

VIṢṆU

Another Āditya who occupies a prominent place in the *Ṛg-Veda*, and whose worship has become a matter of very great importance in the subsequent development of the Vedic religion, is Viṣṇu. Though there are not many *ṛcas* in the *Ṛg-Veda* dedicated to him, yet those hymns are full of sublime thought and spiritual meaning. Viṣṇu is often described as covering the whole universe in three strides. Though he was conceived as identical with the Sun, yet this was with a different implication as the following *ṛcas* show:

'Three of these worlds Viṣṇu strode; thrice did he plant his foot. The whole of this universe was gathered in the dust of his footsteps.

Viṣṇu, the guardian of all, he whom none can deceive, made three strides, and thenceforth established the *dharma*.

As the eyes spread out, as it were, in the sky (behold everything clearly), so do the wise ones see the supreme state of Viṣṇu.

The ever prayerful and awakened wise realize that supreme state of Viṣṇu.'[6]

In these verses the sage clearly identifies Viṣṇu with the supreme Being. The third verse is very important with the orthodox Hindus, as it is always uttered before offering prayers to God. Max Müller tells us that 'the stepping of Viṣṇu is emblematic of the rising, the culminating, and the setting of the sun'.[7] But it signifies also the immanence of Viṣṇu. Yāska, quoting Śākapūṇi, comments on this passage: 'All this is the expression of the power of Viṣṇu. His three strides are the threefold aspect of existence, namely, the terrestrial, the etherial, and the celestial.'[8] Another commentator, Durgācārya, says: 'Viṣṇu is no other than the sun. His . . . three strides are but his three aspects presiding over the three spheres. He

[5] *Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā (Mādhyandina)*, XI.15.16.
[6] *Ṛ.V.*, I.22.17, 18, 20, 21.
[7] *Ṛg-Veda* (Eng. trans.), I. p. 117.
[8] *Nirukta*, XII.19.

exists in the terrestrial region as Agni, in the etherial region as lightning, and in the celestial region as the god Savitṛ.' But the root meaning of the word '*viṣṇu*' must have played a very important part in enlarging the inner significance of the deity. 'Viṣṇu' means the immanent, all-pervasive Principle. So the Vedic sage, while contemplating a particular deity with a limited conception, soared far above the limitations of the sense-world and beheld the true nature of the deity as an all-pervading immanent Principle analogous to the pervasive sky. Thus we see how the conception of a divinity is sublimated in the *Ṛg-Veda.*

INDRA

By far the most important god of the *Ṛg-Veda* is Indra, and he is a purely Indo-Aryan god. Though he was included among the twelve Ādityas, and as such was a celestial deity, still he is always conceived as associated with Maruts, the Wind-gods, whose chief sphere of action is the etherial middle region. Indra is the mighty god who kills the demon Vṛtra, the *asura* of the form of a black serpent (dark monsoon cloud) which holds up the timely rain so viciously. 'The darkness withheld the flow of rain. In Vṛtra's belly the rain-cloud lay concealed. But Indra released the flowing water, thus gathered up by Vṛtra, into the regions down below.'[9] Indra's one concern is to kill this demon Vṛtra and release the sacred rain of heaven so that it may renovate life with green verdure and fresh crops.

There are many hymns in the *Ṛg-Veda* sung in praise of Indra. But it is often found that the *ṛṣis*, while praying to Indra, soared far above the common conception of the deity and caught a glimpse of the eternal Principle in him as well. We give below a few texts in illustration of this point:

'Thou art the limit of this limitless earth. Thou art the ruler of the adorable celestial ones. Thou, in truth, pervadest the whole of the etherial region with thy greatness. None indeed exists like thee' (I.52.13).

'O protector of men, thou art the limit of power of all like the threefold rope (or the thrice twisted rope). Thou art the threefold luminosity in the three regions (sun, lightning, and fire). Thou alone canst sustain this universe. Thou art without beginning and foeless' (I.102.8).

Though the main bulk of the hymns of the *Ṛg-Veda* dedicated to this particular god is for the achievement of mundane welfare as well as heavenly enjoyments, yet such intuitional flashes of transcendental import are not wholly absent from the meditation of the *ṛṣis*.

[9] *Ṛ.V.*, I.54.10.

GODS OF THE ETHERIAL SPHERE

Of the gods belonging to the etherial region, i.e. the intermediary space, Vāyu is the most prominent. Maruts (the gods of storm) and Mātariśvan are but other aspects of the same god.

According to the author of the *Nirukta,* Indra is also the god of space. The eight Vasus, Parjanya (god of cloud), Yama and Yamī (god and goddess of death), and the twin Aśvins, who are variously supposed to be the gods of twilights or the gods of the early morning, also belong to the intermediary space. Besides these, the Viśvedevas are regarded as the gods responsible for rain, that is, they also belong to the etherial region. The goddess Uṣas (Dawn) was considered to be the deity that interlinks both the celestial and the etherial regions. Ṛbhus were originally men, but were subsequently changed into gods of space for their good deeds.

GODS OF THE TERRESTRIAL SPHERE

Agni, the god of fire, is the greatest of the terrestrial gods. He perhaps, next to Indra, got the largest number of prayers from the Vedic *ṛṣis.* Agni is also one of the universally acknowledged pre-Vedic gods whose worship was prevalent among all branches of the Aryan race. To the primitives fire was the most useful, yet the rarest phenomenon of nature, and that naturally evoked in the simple mind of the early Aryans a feeling of deep reverence. The very first hymn of the *Ṛg-Veda* opens with the utterance:

'Praise be to Lord Agni, the chosen priest, the shining one, minister of sacrifice and inviter of gods, possessor of great wealth' (I.1.1).

'Ruler of sacrifices, god of the law eternal, radiant one increasing in thine own abode (sacrificial altar), be unto us easy of approach, even as a father to his son ; be ever present with us for our well-being' (I.1.8-9).

In another place he is praised as follows: 'O Agni, thou art the giver of joy, domestic guide of men, messenger and inviter of gods. Whatever great deeds gods perform, all gather in thee' (I.36.5).

In this passage Agni has been called the lord of the house, that is, the terrestrial abode of men, and he was conceived to be the mouth of all gods as the oblations poured into fire reached them through his aid.

Agni was worshipped by another name, Rudra.[10] The Rudras, as already said, were eleven in number. Probably they were the various aspects of fire.

OTHER MINOR GODS

Besides these principal deities, there is mention of many minor gods and goddesses in the *Ṛg-Veda.* The full import of their worship is not

[10] Cf. Commentary of Sāyaṇa on *Ṛ.V.*, I.27.10 ; I.72.4.

very clear. But from what has been stated above in connection with the larger and smaller numbers of the gods, it is obvious that originally these gods may have been conceived to be different deities, but they were afterwards synthesized by the most advanced among the Vedic sages.

DIFFERENT CONCEPTIONS OF GODS EXPLAINED

At no time are all the members of a society at the same cultural level. This disparity in cultural life must have existed in human society in all ages, even during the very infancy of the human race. It is the belief of the orthodox Hindus that there existed, even at the beginning of human society, perfected souls and seers of a very high order, and through them spiritual truths and rules of right conduct (*dharma*) were revealed to man from time to time. We can safely conjecture that in the early Vedic period of Indian history there might have existed persons of advanced thinking and high spiritual realization as well as men of crude understanding and simple beliefs. From the hymns of the *Ṛg-Veda* as well as of other Saṁhitās we note that the conception of gods and goddesses as definite spiritual forces, having forms and discharging different functions in the scheme of Nature, must have been prevalent among the people. There were some who avowed that they actually saw the forms of gods. But there were others who disbelieved in their corporeal forms; nay, some even doubted the existence of gods (VIII.100.3). Then again, there was the idea of sublimation of these gods and goddesses, as we have already seen, in the minds of not a few *ṛṣis*. Some of them reached the giddy height of the transcendental, and understood the unity of divine essence or spiritual being behind the whole universe. Some *ṛṣis* conceived the entire universe as an organic whole and the different aspects of creation as parts of the macrocosmic unity. There was yet another type who synthesized human society into one being, the Puruṣa. It should be mentioned here that even a superficial reading of the Vedic literature convinces one that the Vedic age must have comprised several millenniums, and it must have taken at least one or two millenniums to develop the culture embodied in the *Ṛg-Veda*. In those prehistoric days of sparse population and difficult inter-communication, the disparity in the cultural life of the people in India can easily be imagined, and that explains the different views about gods prevalent among the *ṛṣis*.

UNITY OF GODHEAD

The following are some of the oft-quoted *mantras* of the *Ṛg-Veda* which signify the unity of Godhead: 'The wise call Him Indra, Agni, Varuṇa, that heavenly golden-winged Garutmat (Sun). To what is one, sages give

many a name: they call Him Agni, Yama, and Mātariśvan' (I.164.46). 'The great divinity of the gods is one' (III.55). In the whole of this *sūkta* (hymn), the *ṛṣi* takes a grand synthetic view of the spiritual force which is responsible for such a beautiful harmony in the different activities of Nature: The same Divinity that burns on the sacrificial altar blazes also as the jungle fire; it flashes as lightning in the sky, and shines as the celestial sun. It ripens the corn as heat, produces the day and night as the rising and setting sun; it is the same Principle that produces rain, expresses the lightning, produces vegetation, and sustains life.

In the famous *Haṁsavatī* hymn (*Ṛ.V.*, IV.40.5), it is mentioned: 'As light he dwells in the luminous sky; as Vasu (air) he dwells in the mid-space; as *hotṛ* (fire) he exists on the sacrificial altar; as a guest he exists in the house; (as life) he exists in man; as supreme Entity he exists; as right (*ṛta*) he exists (everywhere). He shines in the sky, in water, in light, in mountains, and in Truth.' In this *mantra,* the *ṛṣi* has synthesized all divinities into one ensouling Principle, the supreme Spirit or Paramātman. Further, as Sāyaṇa points out, it tells us of the identity of the human soul, the gods, and the supreme Soul.

THE CONCEPTION OF VIŚVAKARMAN AS CREATOR

The *ṛṣis,* in their metaphysical enquiries, conceived an original Creator as the efficient cause of the universe, as is evident in the following lines:

'He who is the father of us all, the procreator, the great Providence, He who knows the whole universe, He is one, yet assumes many names of gods; about Him all people of the world become desirous to know.'[11]

In conceiving this metaphysical genesis of creation, the *ṛṣis* first caught a glimpse of Hiraṇyagarbha (cosmic mind) or Viśvakarman, the great progenitor of the entire universe. In this conception their mind was plainly struggling between the logical implications of the first Cause, in both its material and efficient aspects, and a personal concept as implied by deism and theism:

'At the time of creation what was His basis? How and whence did He start creation, the great Viśvakarman, the Seer of all? How could He extend the sky above and the earth below? His eyes are everywhere, His face is everywhere, and He is of all hands and all feet. He, that one God, moves His hands and wings and creates the sky and the earth. What was that forest and what was that tree (material) out of which have been manufactured the earth and the sky? O wise ones, enquire into these in your mind and realize on what basis He created the universe.'[12]

[11] *Ṛ.V.*, X.82.3.

[12] *Ibid.*, X.81.2-4.

PERSONAL AND IMPERSONAL GODHEAD AND SOUL

From the *Ṛg-Veda* as well as other Vedic literature it becomes clear that the serious thinkers of the Vedic age tried to unravel the mysteries of the universe by three different methods of analysis, namely, the theological, the metaphysical, and the psychological. The first and foremost was the theological method by which they realized intuitively through intense devotion, as has already been shown, that their particular god of adoration and worship was ultimately no other than a transcendental impersonal Principle that stands at the back of the whole universe and yet appears to be related to it as its creator and preserver. Further on, in their full comprehension of that supreme Principle they could realize him as a cosmic Being (Parama Puruṣa) and the whole universe as His body:

'The Puruṣa is of a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet. He exists pervading the whole terrestrial regions and above it by ten fingers (ten quarters or space). Whatever was or whatever will be—all that is Puruṣa. He is also the master of immortality, as He is untouched by the fruits of action (*karma*). All these (creation) are His grandeur, but the Puruṣa is ever superior to all these (in His transcendental aspect). The whole of the universe is only one-fourth (a portion) of His being, the remaining three-fourths remain in celestial immortality.'[18]

In these famous *mantras*, the Vedic sage clearly visualizes the immanency of the intelligent Principle, whose physical vesture is composed of this material universe, but whose inner nature is transcendental.

In the previous hymns of Hiraṇyagarbha and Viśvakarman, the sages were contemplating the theistic origin of creation. The *Puruṣa-sūkta*, on the other hand, promulgates the pantheistic view of creation. But it tells also of the transcendental aspect of the first Cause. So the theistic view made room for a metaphysical understanding of the problem with all its logical implications. Its consummation we notice in the famous *Nāsadīya-sūkta*:

'At that time (before creation) there was neither aught nor naught (the manifest and the unmanifest). There was neither this terrestrial region, nor the far expanding etherial region above. Was there anything that covers (the mist or *māyā*)? Who lived where? Was there the fathomless abyss of waters?

'Then there was neither death nor immortality (mortals and immortals); nor were there the night and day and their difference. Then there existed that sole One (supreme Self) without a stir or breath (action or change). There was nothing else but the One.

'Then there was darkness enveloped in darkness. All was undiffer-

[18] *Ibid.*, X.90.1-3.

entiated, engulfed in water (the primal cause). What existed was enveloped with unreality (*māyā*). His grandeur was manifested by austerity (knowledge or will).

'There first appeared desire (will) in the (cosmic) mind and from that first one sprang the seed (of creation). The wise sages realized in their hearts the birth of the real (manifest world) from the unreal (unmanifest or *māyā*).'[14]

In the above hymns, it is specially to be noted that the Vedic sages realized the existence of a transcendental Entity beyond all limitations of the physical universe. The last verse clearly shows the unreality of the created universe, as is hinted also by the epithet 'unreal' applied to the stuff that shrouded the first Principle as expressed in the preceding verse. Here we find the origin of the Māyā theory of the Vedāntins.

In another hymn, which is dedicated to the goddess Māyā, we note: 'The sages in their minds realize that the Bird (all-pervasive God) is covered up by the *māyā* of the mighty One. The seers describe it as happening in the Ocean (infinity of Being); they all feel desirous to reach the supreme Abode of life. . . . I saw the herdsman (individual soul) who never falls, but, sometimes near and sometimes far, is traversing various paths. Sometimes he wears many clothes together and sometimes he puts them on severally, and thus he is going and coming to this world again and again.'[15]

'In order to make himself visible, Indra assumed various forms according to every form. He assumes many forms by his *māyā*. He is endowed with a thousand rays.'[16]

In these verses, there is a clear indication of the fact that the individual soul is deluded by the *māyā* which belongs to the supreme Deity, and it exists all the time in the supreme Being which has been called the Ocean. Though this Jīvātman or individual soul is essentially immortal, yet it is made to wear clothes of different *guṇas* or bodies, and as such is forced to be born in various forms of life and undergo the infinite process of metempsychosis.

Though the metaphysical thoughts are not so well developed in the *Ṛg-Veda*, as we find them in the later stages of Vedic culture, particularly in the Upaniṣads, yet there are sufficient indications to show that even in those early days the Aryan mind definitely caught a glimpse of the transcendental, and tried to explain the relative and temporal in terms of the Absolute.

The psychological approach to the ultimate problem was also discussed in the *Ṛg-Veda*, although its later development in the Upaniṣads was much

[14] *Ibid.*, X.129.1-4. [15] *Ibid.*, X.177.1, 3. [16] *Ibid.*, VI.47.18.

more extensive and far-reaching in its effect on the cultural life of ancient India. In the *Ṛg-Veda* (I.164) we notice at first that a doubt is raised about the reality of the physical man. A *ṛṣi* questions:

'Who saw the First, being born, when the boneless covered the bony (the unmanifest *māyā* covered all manifestations)? From earth arose the breath and blood, but whence is the Ātman (soul)? Who enquired about this of the sages?' (4).

'Am I really this (the physical body), that I know not? For I am not of clear mind and wander about being in doubt and bondage' (37).

Then in the very next verse he avows: 'The immortal, residing with the mortal in the same place and having got the physical body, sometimes goes to upper regions and sometimes to lower. Both of them always remain together and move about together. People can recognize one of them, the other is not recognized' (38).

In the same hymn it is said: 'Two birds reside in friendship on the same tree; one of them eats the fruit of the tree, the other eats not, but only looks at them' (20). Again we read, 'The immortal Jīva, being associated with the mortal (body) moves about with its cause while enjoying the fruits' (30).

These passages clearly indicate that the individual soul is immortal and transmigrates in various ways to different planes of existence. Further, the identity of the individual soul with the cosmic Spirit has been revealed by two well-known hymns of the *Ṛg-Veda*. One is the utterance of Ṛṣi Vāmadeva and the other that of the woman *ṛṣi*, Vāc. Vāmadeva, by virtue of his realization of the supreme Self, exclaims: 'I am Manu, I am the sun, I am the intelligent sage Kakṣīvat. . . . I am the poet Uśanas, behold me! I have offered the terrestrial regions to the Āryas, I have given rain to the men who offer oblations. I am the giver of water with thunderous sounds. All gods obey my command!' (IV.26.1-2). Vāc also speaks in the same strain: 'I am the queen of the whole universe, the bestower of all wealth. I am the knower of Truth, the first among the worshipful. The gods have placed me in various regions, as diverse are my abodes, and I exist in various living beings' etc. (X.125.3).

SIGNIFICANCE OF YAJÑA

The ritualistic aspect of the Vedic sacrifice (*yajña*), which attained so much complexity in the Brāhmaṇas, originated from the simple belief that the supreme Being, Parama Puruṣa, had sacrificed Himself in creating the universe, as is described in the *Puruṣa-sūkta*. Whenever references are made to creation, the origin of the seasons, or any other natural phenomena, it is done in the language of sacrifices and oblations. This clearly indicates

that the ancient Vedic *ṛṣis* looked upon the entire cosmic process as the performance of a great sacrifice, and believed that man's spiritual nature can best be quickened if he tries to mould himself in consonance with that cosmic order.

Self-abnegation and harmony were the keynotes of the spiritual life of the Vedic sages. In fact, this spirit of sacrifice, restraint, and harmony through love, and the desire for the attainment of immortality in life, came to be the dominant factors of the cultural life of the Indo-Aryans from the earliest days of the *Ṛg-Veda*. No one can understand the full significance of the spiritual culture of India, both ancient and modern, unless he keeps in view these predominant trends of the inner thought-life of the land. One in the many, unity in variety, harmony and not discord, is the perennial message of Vedic India. The last *sūkta* of the *Ṛg-Veda* breathes this out unequivocally thus:

'Assemble together, speak with one voice, let your minds be all of one accord. . . . Let all priests deliberate in a common way. Common be their assembly, common be their mind, so be their thoughts united. . . . United be the thoughts of all, that all may live happily, that ye may all happily reside' (X.191.2-4).

12

VEDIC CULTURE

THE Vedic literature consists of the four Vedas and several auxiliary works. Each of the four Vedas is divided into the Saṁhitā portion, containing the original texts of the Vedas, and the Brāhmaṇa portion, containing interpretations of the contents of the original texts. This latter is again divided into the Brāhmaṇas proper, dealing with interpretation of rituals, the Āraṇyakas, dealing with worship and contemplation, and the Upaniṣads, dealing with philosophical questions. All these constitute the Śruti.

The Vedāṅgas are works needed for understanding Vedic texts. They are six—Śikṣā (phonetics), Kalpa (ritual), Vyākaraṇa (grammar), Nirukta (etymology), Chandas (metre), and Jyotiṣa (astronomy). Kalpa is subdivided into Śrauta-Sūtras, Gṛhya-Sūtras, and Dharma-Sūtras, dealing respectively with sacrificial rites, domestic rituals, and social rules. The Prātiśākhyas, which contain phonetics, grammar, and metre ; the Anukramaṇīs (indices) ; and the Caraṇa-vyūhas (branches of the Vedas) also must be brought under Vedāṅgas, though they cannot be definitely placed under any of the six recognized headings.

Of the large number of Vedic recensions mentioned by the *Caraṇa-vyūha*, only a few are now extant. The *Ṛg-Veda* has only one. The two Saṁhitās of the *Yajur-Veda*, viz. the *Black* (*Taittirīya*) and the *White* (*Vājasaneyi*), have respectively four (Taittirīya, Kāṭhaka, Maitrāyaṇī, and Kapiṣṭhala) and two (Mādhyandina and Kāṇva) recensions. The *Atharva-Veda* has come down in two recensions, Śaunakīya and Paippalāda. The Vedic literature is thus an immense one, and our study of the culture of the Vedas must be based on this vast mass.

ARRANGEMENT OF THE HYMNS OF THE ṚG-VEDA

The *Ṛg-Veda Saṁhitā* has nearly 10,500 verses, grouped into 1,017 hymns, collected in ten *maṇḍalas* (books) of unequal length. These hymns are composed by various poets (or *ṛṣis*). The first and the tenth *maṇḍalas* are by many authors of different families ; the unity between them is that each of them contains exactly 191 hymns. They are thus placed in the beginning and in the end. The *maṇḍalas* from II to VII have complete unity of authorship, II to VI being composed by Gṛtsamada, Viśvāmitra, Vāmadeva, Atri, Bharadvāja, and the poets of their families respectively, while the entire seventh *maṇḍala* is by Vasiṣṭha. Kaṇva and his family

form the predominant group of authors of the eighth *maṇḍala*. The whole of the ninth is made up of hymns addressed to Soma Pavamāna; its poets belong to different families. The general arrangement thus places the 'family hymns' in the middle, the Soma Pavamāna *maṇḍala* coming immediately afterwards. Generally this arrangement is based on an ascending order in the number of hymns. If there is any deviation, there is an explanation. Thus Mādhava, an ancient Ṛg-Vedic commentator, says that although the third *maṇḍala* by Viśvāmitra is longer than the fourth *maṇḍala* by Vāmadeva, it is placed before the latter, as it contains the famous *Gāyatrī mantra*. But Viśvāmitra does not supersede Gṛtsamada, the author of the second *maṇḍala*, in so far as the latter, Gṛtsamada, was originally a Kṣatriya, and through the grace of Indra became a Brāhmaṇa, endowed with 'poetic vision'.

The internal arrangement within a *maṇḍala* places the father's hymns first; the son's hymns follow. But in the fifth *maṇḍala*, Sūktas 52 and the following, composed by Śyāvāśva, precede the Sūktas 63 and 64, composed by his father, Arcanānas. Here the order is reversed, because the son had composed far more hymns than the father. Except in the eighth *maṇḍala*, and in the ninth which is wholly devoted to Soma Pavamāna, everywhere hymns to Agni come first, then those to Indra, followed by those addressed to other deities.

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE FOUR VEDAS

The *Ṛg-Veda* contains only verses, composed mainly in simple metres, of three or four lines of eight, eleven, and twelve syllables. There are many complicated metres also. The principles of classical Sanskrit metres do not apply to the Vedic metres in many cases. The *Yajur-Veda*, however, is essentially a prose work, its occasional metrical passages being stanzas quoted from the *Ṛg-Veda*, often with variations in reading. Thus the Ṛg-Vedic passage '*dyumanaṁ citraśravastamam*' (III.59.6) becomes in the *Yajur-Veda* '*satyaṁ citraśravastamam*' (III.4.2.5). In size, the *Yajur-Veda* is about two-thirds of the *Ṛg-Veda*. While the *Ṛg-Veda*, with its hymns addressed to the deities, starts with a prayer, 'I worship the Fire placed in front', the *Yajur-Veda* has short prose passages in the form of formulas addressed to the articles used in the rituals, e.g. 'For the fulfilment of my desire I welcome thee'. This formula is addressed to a twig of the *palāśa* tree, when it is cut, which is one of the preliminary rites of the 'new and full moon sacrifices'. There are also passages like, 'O Knife, do not hurt him' and 'O Stones, listen', addressed to the knife and the stones used in certain rites. Sacrificial formulas and prayers are interspersed with explanatory passages in the *Black Yajur-Veda*, while the *White* contains

only sacrificial formulas, Kāṇva and Mādhyandina recensions differing mainly in readings.

The *Sāma-Veda* is metrical, nearly half the size of the *Ṛg-Veda*, with a considerable part borrowed from the latter. Its internal arrangement follows the sequence of the sacrifices.

The *Atharva-Veda* is divided into twenty sections or books. While in the *Ṛg-Veda* the greater portion is of use in sacrifices and in the *Yajur-Veda* and the *Sāma-Veda* the entire purpose is sacrificial, the *Atharva-Veda* has practically no connection with sacrifices, except in its last portions. It is also mainly a metrical work, though the second half contains some prose passages. In this Veda, we meet with charms and spells to drive away diseases, to injure the enemy, to bring prosperity and long life to the king, to achieve domestic harmony and peace, and for other similar purposes. In size, it is about half of the *Ṛg-Veda*. About a fifth of its material is from the *Ṛg-Veda*, with variations in reading. Of its twenty books, the first thirteen, with subject-matter of a miscellaneous nature, are arranged according to the length of the hymns, shorter ones coming earlier. The fourteenth consists mainly of *mantras* to be used in marriages, mostly borrowed from the *Ṛg-Veda*. The fifteenth is highly philosophical, being a glorification of the supreme Being. The next two are very short, containing many conjurations. The eighteenth, mainly taken from the *Ṛg-Veda*, is devoted to burial rites. While the next is again of a miscellaneous nature, the twentieth, practically borrowed bodily from the *Ṛg-Veda* with little variations in reading, contains hymns mostly addressed to Indra. The following are a few specimens of Atharva-Vedic hymns taken from recognized translations:

Just as the soul with soul-desires swift to a distance flies away,
So even thou, O Cough, fly forth along the soul's quick-darting course
(VI.105.1).

O Assembly, we know thy name,
'Frolic' truly by name thou art;
May all who meet and sit in thee
Be in their speech one with me (VII.13.2).

As, rising in the east, the sun the stars' bright lustre takes away,
So both of women and of men, my foes, the strength I take away
(VII.14.1).

Rise up from hence, O man, and straight away casting
Death's fetters from thy feet, depart not downward;
From life upon this earth be not yet sundered,
Nor from the sight of Agni and the sunlight (VIII.1.4).

All that the world's Lord made, all that for creatures Prajāpati and Mātariśvan fashioned.
All things within the quarters and their spaces, let all these be my manifold defences (XIX.20.2).

Thereafter rose desire in the beginning, desire the primal seed and germ of Spirit,
O Kāma, dwelling with the lofty *kāma*, give growth of riches to the sacrificer (XIX.52.1).

All arms and every arrow, all the power and the might that bows possess,
The warlike weapon, axes, swords, the plan and purpose in heart,
All this, O Arbudin, make thou visible to our enemies, and let them look on mist and fog (XI.11.1).

Of the *Ṛg-Veda* itself, a little over half consists of hymns to Indra and Agni, other important gods to whom hymns are sung being Aśvins, Savitṛ, Sūrya, Varuṇa, Uṣas, Pūṣan, Maruts, Rudra, Soma, Viṣṇu, and Viśvedevas. Besides these, there are also philosophical hymns like the *Hiraṇyagarbha-sūkta* (X.121), the well-known *Puruṣa-sūkta* (X.90), the hymn of creation (X.129), the funeral hymn (X.14), and the one to departed spirits (X.15). The entire hymn to Viśvedevas by Dīrghatamas (I.164) is highly philosophical, and is frequently quoted in the Upaniṣads. Of the Saṁvāda (dialogue) hymns the important ones are those between Yama and Yamī (X.10) and Purūravas and Urvaśī (X.95)—an episode well known in later mythology. Apart from hymns dealing with the evils of gambling (X.34), with frogs (VII.103), and a few individual verses having a secular value, the Ṛg-Vedic text is essentially sacrificial, like the *Yajur-Veda* and *Sāma-Veda*.

It is clear from the nature of this vast literature that it can give us a fair idea of only the religion and religious practices of the period. Nothing but a superficial view can be had, from occasional allusions in the texts, about the secular aspects—political and social institutions, material conditions, domestic and civic life, position of women, occupations, recreations, and the like.

VEDIC GODS AND MYTHOLOGY

The Vedic Aryans worshipped many gods: Indra, Agni, Varuṇa, and others. But each is in turn worshipped as the highest God, the creator and sustainer of the world, the giver of happiness to man, and his protector from evils. In many places, in the *Ṛg-Veda*, Indra is spoken of as the sole lord of the universe; he alone 'is the lord of man and wealth' (I.7.9). So also is Hiraṇyagarbha 'the sole lord' (X.121.1), and Agni, 'like Varuṇa, the sole lord of wealth' (I.143.4). Indra 'supported and spread

the earth' (I.103.2), while Soma is called 'the supporter of heaven' (IX.76.1). The prayer to Viśvedevas, 'May we complete the God-ordained life!' (I.89.8), is like the prayer to Sūrya, 'May we live a hundred years!' (VII.66.16). Examples may be multiplied. Nearly all the gods are endowed with every great divine attribute, a view true of the Paurāṇic times also, extolling Viṣṇu, Śiva, Kārttikeya, and others each as the highest God, when praising them.

The so-called Vedic polytheism is, however, only an aspect of the monism and monotheism of the *Ṛg-Veda*. The foundation of Indian monism may be seen in the 46th verse of the hymn of Dīrghatamas (I.164), '*Ekaṁ sad-viprā bahudhā vadanti*' (Truth is one; sages call it by various names). While dealing with the gods of the Vedas, Yāska says that there is only one God. On earth (*pṛthivī-sthāna*), He appears as the Fire; in the mid-region (*antarikṣa-sthāna*), as Indra; and in the celestial region (*dyu-sthāna*), as Savitṛ. The various gods in each of these three planes are only aspects of these three manifestations of the one God (*Nirukta*, VII.5).

The one God, as Fire on earth, functions as the *dūta* (messenger) to bring the gods to the sacrifices and to carry oblations to them; He is the mouth of the gods. He mediates between gods and men; He is the lord of the home (*gṛhapati*) and the bestower of worldly benefits. As Indra, He wields his mighty thunderbolt (*vajra*), kills Vṛtra, and lets loose the waters obstructed by him. Indra is the greatest *soma*-drinker. He is described as having fixed the earth in its position and as having raised the sun to his position to illuminate the worlds. The epithet '*vṛṣan*' (the sprinkler) shows his association with rain. Many stories current in later mythology about Śrī Kṛṣṇa are traceable to Ṛg-Vedic Indra. Thus the killing of Vṛtra developed into the story of the trampling of the dragon Kāliya, who defiled the waters of the Yamunā. Many of the other exploits of Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana are reminiscent of the killing of other demons by Indra. Indra as the wielder of *vajra*, the giver of rain, and the head of the celestials, however, remained as such in later mythology. Savitṛ of the *Ṛg-Veda*, who is the manifestation of the one God on the highest plane, is different from Sūrya, Mitra, and others; but in later mythology they all became one.

Though appearing subordinate due to the smaller number of hymns addressed to him, Viṣṇu, another god in the highest plane (*dyu-loka*), is the highest God *par excellence* in the *Ṛg-Veda*, as can be seen from the expression 'highest position of Viṣṇu' (I.22.20), which is applied to no other god in the *Ṛg-Veda*. He is known for his three strides (*trivikramaṇa*), and in later mythology the event reappears in the story of Viṣṇu vanquishing Bali. Bṛhaspati of the *Ṛg-Veda* is associated with killing the demon Vala and

recovering the cows concealed within the mountain caves. This gave the basis for the story of Kṛṣṇa protecting the cows under Govardhana and for the epithets '*govinda*' and '*gopāla*' applied to him. Though Kṛṣṇa is not mentioned in the *Ṛg-Veda* as a god, his personality in later mythology is constituted of elements associated with various gods of the *Ṛg-Veda.*

According to Yāska, the gods are thirty-three in number, each of the three planes having eleven. Other important gods are the Earth, the Rivers, and Soma on the terrestrial plane; Apāṁ Napāt, Mātariśvan, Aja-Ekapād, Rudra, Maruts, Parjanya, and Waters on the *antarikṣa* or mid-plane; and Dyu, Varuṇa, Uṣas, and Aśvins on the celestial plane. These three planes, as described in the *Ṛg-Veda,* should not be taken to mean the three visible regions of the world. Really the earth, the atmosphere, and the heavens, as seen by us, are only different regions of the *pṛthivī-loka* (terrestrial plane of the *Ṛg-Veda*). The *antarikṣa-loka,* the next higher one, is a finer aspect of the universe, and is the *svarga-loka* of later mythology. Its essential nature is what is meant by the term '*āpaḥ*' (waters), the second of the five elements (*pañcabhūtas*) of later Hindu philosophy. The still higher plane is *dyu-loka.* Its essential nature is luminosity, corresponding to *tejas* (fire), the third element, in philosophy, and to *vaikuṇṭha,* the residence of Viṣṇu, in the mythology of later days. Besides this threefold division, there is also a mention of the sevenfold division of the universe. This comprises the two remaining elements of *vāyu* (air) and *ākāśa* (ether), besides the three elements mentioned above, and also *buddhi* and *ahaṅkāra,* which, according to later philosophical doctrines of the evolution of the world, are earlier stages than the *indriyas* (senses) and the five elements. The relation between the conceptions of the world in the *Ṛg-Veda* and in later philosophy and mythology has yet to be systematically studied. There is no doubt that these different conceptions represent an unbroken development from the Vedic days.

NATURE OF THE VEDIC GODS

It is not easy to decide the exact nature of the gods in the Vedas. They are represented as human in form. They have different limbs, wear ornaments, carry weapons, and travel in chariots drawn by horses and other animals. Some of their attributes relate them to various natural phenomena. Indra's letting loose the waters may be equated with the breaking up of the rain-clouds and the consequent fall of rain. The Maruts are the storm-gods. Uṣas is the dawn, while Viṣṇu, Savitṛ, Sūrya, and Mitra represent the sun that rises and sets every day. But there are gods, like Varuṇa and Aśvins, whose relation to natural phenomena is not very clear.

No attempt at identifying any natural phenomenon with any god can

give an absolutely satisfactory result. The Vedic poets were directly aware of certain 'powers' and 'facts', invisible, and incomprehensible to ordinary men. They *saw* the gods, and described what they saw. It is only one who could have such a vision that is called a *ṛṣi*. The *Bṛhaddevatā*, a work related to the Vedas, narrates the story of Śyāvāśva, the son of Arcanānas, who was not a *ṛṣi*, but was recognized as one when after *tapas* he could *see* the Maruts. There are many similar stories showing that the Vedic poets had this extraordinary experience of communion and that when they wrote, their aim was not to describe visible natural phenomena like the rain-clouds and the morning dawn. The Vedic religion is the result of the attempt of the *ṛṣis* to interpret the true nature of their direct experience of inner 'powers' in terms of the objective nature known to ordinary men. Even an ordinary man can invoke the gods through the *mantras* composed by the *ṛṣis*. Indeed the essential feature of the Vedic religion is this direct communion between gods and men. The worship of the gods by the Vedic Aryans therefore did not spring, as is usually supposed, from the fear of natural phenomena like thunder and storm, or from wonder at seeing the morning dawn and the clear starry nights. The gods are the friends of man ; their most obvious quality is *benevolence*, and they are invoked for favours. Power is only an indispensable attribute of a protecting agency, not the chief feature.

As a matter of fact, even gods, like other mortals, were born at some time. There is frequent allusion to their birth. 'Indra was without a foe from his birth' (I.102.8 ; X.133.2). The Ṛbhus were the sons of Sudhanvan, who belonged to the Aṅgiras family. The Maruts were originally men, who later became immortal and partakers of *soma*-offering. There is mention of the birth of the Aśvins. Most of the gods are the sons of the goddess Aditi. In other words, they were earlier products in the course of the evolution of the universe. Thus, some of the gods were only human beings who had risen to higher levels. This is another channel for the direct communion between them and men.

CONCEPTION OF LIFE AND AFTER-LIFE

Through the favour of the gods, man lived a happy life for the full period allotted to him by them, which was one hundred years. Very often do we come across prayers to gods to vouchsafe the full 'God-ordained period of life'. Gold, cattle, sons, and grandsons are the objects which the Vedic Aryans prayed for from the gods. There is absolutely no touch of pessimism in their outlook on life. There is no idea that the world is a place of misery. There is no yearning to get rid of the body and to escape

from the shackles of this world. This world was conceived as a place where one can have happiness through the favour of the gods.

After death man went to the next world, a place of higher happiness, known as the *pitṛ-loka,* where the departed forefathers lived. In this place Yama rules. There is a beautiful description of it in the *Ṛg-Veda* (IX.113.7-11):

> O Pavamāna, place me in that deathless undecaying world, wherein the light of heaven is set and everlasting lustre shines;
> Make me immortal in that realm where dwells the King, Vivasvān's son, where is the secret shrine of heaven, where are those waters young and fresh;
> Make me immortal in that realm where they move even as they list, in the third sphere of inmost heaven where lucid worlds are full of light;
> Make me immortal in that realm of eager wish and strong desire, the region of radiant moon, where food and full delight are found;
> Make me immortal in that realm where happiness and transports abound, where joys and felicities combine, and longing wishes are fulfilled.

There is nothing explicitly and definitely said about the future of the man when he enters the other world. According to later Indian philosophy and religion, life in this higher world is as ephemeral as in this physical world, for man returns here after enjoying the fruits of his deeds to take up another body. This process continues till the final release. This going and coming, this round of births and deaths, is what is called *saṁsāra* or transmigration of the soul. In the early Vedic literature there is no express mention of this doctrine. We come across it for the first time in the Upaniṣads. But there is enough evidence even in the *Ṛg-Veda* to show that the Vedic Aryans knew of this transmigration of the soul.

The Ṛg-Vedic *ṛṣis* recognized an eternal entity which continued to exist when this physical body expired. This entity goes to another world, where it enjoys the fruits of good deeds—the *iṣṭāpūrta.* It assumes another body when it enters the higher world after death. If this is the case, what is the distinction between mortality and immortality? There is, however, a differentiation between mortals and immortals. The Maruts were originally mortals who later became immortal. The Ṛbhus were men who later became gods and partakers of the *soma* as a result of their good deeds. The distinction between mortals and immortals can be explained only if we

assume that there was an end to the life of the mortals in the higher world in a new body and that they returned to this physical world to assume another body.

The Ṛg-Vedic *ṛṣis* sing of a place where only those who had found the 'path' could go after death. Some have found the 'path', Yama being the first among them. The *ṛṣis* called Aṅgirasas, too, had known the 'path' The Ṛg-Vedic *ṛṣis* also sing of the two paths—*devayāna* and *pitṛyāna*. The only way in which we can consistently explain such references is to assume that after death the souls have two courses. One is to go along the 'path', and there is no return to the physical life after that. They become immortal. The other course is to return to this physical world after the fruits of the good deeds of the previous life have been enjoyed in the higher world, which is, however, below the world to which the 'path' leads.

Consistently with such an assumption, there is at least one verse in the *Ṛg-Veda* which is capable of being interpreted as clearly mentioning a return to this world after the enjoyment of the fruits of one's good deeds in the *pitṛ-loka*. The verse is usually translated as: 'Unite with the fathers, unite with Yama, with the reward of thy sacrifices and good deeds, in the highest heaven ; leaving blemish behind, *go back to thy home* ; unite with thy body full of vigour.' This interpretation assumes that for the souls the real home is the heavenly world. It is the word '*ehi*' which is here translated as 'go back'. Expressions like '*ehi*' and '*āyāhi*' occur several times in the *Ṛg-Veda*, and in all such places the translation should be 'come here' and not 'go back'. It is difficult to find another passage for the conception of heaven as the true home of the souls. Therefore a more natural interpretation will be: 'Unite with the fathers, unite with Yama, with the reward of thy sacrifices and good deeds, in the highest heaven ; free from blemishes, *come again here to this home*, full of vigour, unite with a body.' This verse occurs in the context of the funeral, and this is the only occasion in the whole of the *Ṛg-Veda*, where there is the possibility of a mention of a return to this world after death. To say that it cannot mean a return to the world after death because the doctrine of transmigration of the soul was not known to the Ṛg-Vedic Aryans, and that the doctrine of transmigration was not known to the Ṛg-Vedic Aryans because there is no mention of it in the *Ṛg-Veda*, is arguing in a circle.

KARMA AND JÑĀNA LEAD TO DIFFERENT WORLDS

The difference in the nature of the fruits attainable from *karma* and *jñāna* is a Ṛg-Vedic one ; it is not a difference between the *Ṛg-Veda* and the Upaniṣads. There are two points frequently met with in the *Ṛg-Veda*: one is the story of Vṛtra obstructing the flow of waters, and Indra killing him

and letting the waters flow. The other is the story of Vala hiding the cows within the mountain caves, and Indra killing him and recovering them. Bṛhaspati is closely associated with the recovery of the cows as also with songs (knowledge). The cows are nothing but light. This shows that in the *Ṛg-Veda* there is a conception of the world consisting of three regions in which the characteristic features are respectively *pṛthivī*, *āpas*, and *tejas*. The more frequent story is that of Indra killing Vṛtra and letting the waters flow. This is the central theme. This is what the sacrifices bring about: to break the barrier between this world and the world next *higher* to our world. The breaking of the barrier between our world and the *highest* world is not effected through sacrifices, but only through songs (knowledge). It will be noticed that the gods who are fond of songs (*sūktabhājas*) are in the highest world.

This difference between sacrifice and knowledge as the means of getting at two different higher worlds is very noticeable in the *Ṛg-Veda*. The sacrifice is represented by the bull (the *vṛṣabha*, the sprinkler). This brings into prominence the characteristic feature of the region attained through sacrifice, namely, waters. Knowledge is represented by the horse. Dadhyac, a *ṛṣi*, gives out the highest knowledge, the *madhuvidyā*, with a horse's head. The Aśvins, the possessors of the horse, are also possessors of the highest knowledge. There is a hymn addressed to the horse, Dadhikrāvan. At the end of this hymn comes the statement 'May he (Dadhikrāvan) make our mouth sweet; may he take us across our lives' (*Ṛ.V.*, IV.39.6). The sweetness of the mouth is only the *madhuvidyā*, the highest knowledge. And this is here connected with the horse. Then comes the famous stanza '*Haṁsaḥ śuciṣat* . . .' (IV.40.5), which is often quoted in philosophical works.

Soma is connected with the gods of ritualism, and *madhu* is connected with the gods of wisdom. The Aśvins are connected with *madhu*, and Indra with *soma*. Yāska draws the distinction between the two kinds of gods, those who receive oblations (*havirbhājas*) and those who receive songs (*sūktabhājas*). There are many gods who are propitiated with songs, while others are propitiated with *soma* in sacrifices, thus showing their preference for *jñāna* and *karma* respectively.

A careful study of the *Ṛg-Veda* shows that even in the early times, *karma* and *jñāna* were recognized as two separate factors in the spiritual progress of man. *Karma* is connected with the world immediately above the one in which we live; and *jñāna* is connected with the world further above that. Agni and Indra are connected with sacrifices, and the gods of the highest world are connected with prayer, with *jñāna*. Since the Vedic Saṁhitās are intimately connected with sacrifices, it is but natural that the

gods connected with sacrifices, the gods of the two lower regions, should be more prominent in the *Ṛg-Veda*. This explains the apparent predominance of the two gods, Agni and Indra, in the *Ṛg-Veda*, and also the apparently subordinate position assigned to Viṣṇu, calculated on the basis of the number of *sūktas* devoted to that god, who still remains in the highest world.

It is only through *jñāna* that the soul can get into a state of everlasting bliss. This *jñāna* is esoteric knowledge. Indra confided it to the sage Dadhyac on condition that it should not be disclosed to any one else ; the penalty for breaking this obligation was that his head would burst. The Aśvins wanted to get this wisdom, the *madhuvidyā*. They gave the sage a horse's head, and with that head he gave out the knowledge to the Aśvins. This is a story that is very frequently alluded to in the *Ṛg-Veda*. The name Aśvins, the description of Dadhikrāvan, the horse-god, the white horse which the Aśvins gave to King Pedu, the occurrence of the famous verse '*Haṁsaḥ śuciṣat* . . .' at the end of the Dadhikrāvan hymn, and various other facts in the *Ṛg-Veda* show that, at the time of the *Ṛg-Veda*, the *ṛṣis* had evolved a highly complicated system of philosophy and that the value of *jñāna* as a means to final release from the world of physical bondage had been well established.

The *Yajur-Veda* and the *Sāma-Veda* are of little importance to a student of ancient Indian culture. One notes the same optimistic tone in the *Yajur-Veda*, regarding man's life in this world and his future in the other world. Material plenty is also quite noticeable. Gold and ornaments are spoken of freely as covetable objects. Cows are mentioned in thousands. So far as culture is concerned, so far as religion and philosophy go, there is no difference between the *Ṛg-Veda* and the other two Vedas.

CULTURAL VALUE OF THE ATHARVA-VEDA

The *Atharva-Veda* brings in a new note. There we find signs of a gloomier side in man's life. Black magic, injury to one's enemies, and various other aspects of life, which we are wont to call more primitive, are in the forefront in the *Atharva-Veda*. There is considerable scope for dispute regarding the claim of the *Atharva-Veda* to be counted as a Veda at all. Even in Indian literature three Vedas and four Vedas are mentioned side by side. The literature connected with sacrifices recognizes only three Vedas. Jaimini in his *Mīmāṁsā-Sūtras* defines only the *Ṛg-Veda*, the *Yajur-Veda*, and the *Sāma-Veda*, ignoring the *Atharva-Veda*, which has no place in the sacrifices. In a sacrifice there are four kinds of priests: the *hotṛ*, connected with the *Ṛg-Veda* ; the *adhvaryu*, connected with the *Yajur-Veda* ; the *udgātṛ*, connected with the *Sāma-Veda* ; and the *brahman*, who supervises the whole sacrifice. *Brahman* is sometimes connected

with the *Atharva-Veda.* This relation is not natural; it is only an attempt at an equation. If one may risk an opinion, it may be said that the *Atharva-Veda* represents a current of Indian culture that runs parallel to the current represented by the other Vedas; and that it is the earlier stage of a current that culminated in the Āgama and Tantra literature. Most of the Upaniṣads composed at a later date, which are mostly of a sectarian nature, have been tagged on to the *Atharva-Veda.*

Although the *Atharva-Veda* was not one of the Vedas, if by Veda we mean the sacrificial literature, yet it will ever remain one of our richest heritages representing the secular and pre-eminently intellectual aspect of our ancients. The term '*atharvan*' was from the very beginning associated with intellectualism. The famous hymn composed by Dīrghatamas is highly philosophical, and the two passages 'Truth is one; sages call it by various names' (*Ṛ.V.*, I.164.46) and 'There are two birds, with fair wings, knit with bonds of union . . .' (*Ṛ.V.*, I.164.20), which has been the basic text for latter-day Indian philosophy regarding the relation between the supreme Soul and the individual soul, occur in this hymn; and the author Dīrghatamas belongs to the Atharvan family. In the *Raghuvaṁśa* (I), where the king Dilīpa goes to his teacher Vasiṣṭha to consult him on very important State matters, Kālidāsa refers to Vasiṣṭha as the repository of *Atharva*-knowledge (*Ātharvanidhi*).

There was no conflict between the civilization represented by the three Vedas and that represented by the *Atharva-Veda.* They represent two aspects of a civilization that is single and unitary. One can safely say that the three Vedas represent mainly the aspect of ancient Indian civilization dealing with the goal of man in a future life, and the *Atharva-Veda* represents chiefly the other aspect, dealing with the life of man in this world. The three Vedas deal with gods and sacrifices; the *Atharva-Veda* deals with man, his protection from enemies, destruction of foes, kings and politics, welfare in this life, and similar things.

There is another aspect, namely, the aspect of high philosophy. The three Vedas are not so intimately related to the problems of the Absolute as is the *Atharva-Veda.* Even if we reckon the number of hymns related to philosophy, we find a larger number of philosophical hymns in the *Atharva-Veda* than in the *Ṛg-Veda.* And nearly all the philosophical verses in the *Ṛg-Veda* are common to the *Atharva-Veda.* Thus from the point of view of the problems relating to the Absolute, the *Atharva-Veda* has a special importance.

ATTITUDE TOWARDS LIFE ON EARTH

From the *Ṛg-Veda,* we find that the people enjoyed a very high degree of material comfort. There was plenty and luxury. Gold ornaments and

fine robes were available in profusion. Music, dance, and other arts had attained a high degree of perfection. There is nothing to show that the Ṛg-Vedic *ṛṣis* considered the world as an evil. There is no indication of any desire to escape from this world. It is true that they sing in praise of happiness in a future world, and they also sing about the stage in a future world from which there is no return to this physical world. But that does not mean that they fought shy of this world. To them this world was a good world. Gods helped men during their life in this world, which was a sort of sojourn. The *ṛṣis* considered this world as a fit place for virtuous people to lead a good life under the protection of beneficent gods. This world formed the true stepping-stone to a higher life in other regions. There is no tinge of pessimism in the Vedas, either in its religion or in its philosophy. There is little mention of evil and the fate of evil men. The emphasis was on the glory that awaited virtuous men after their death. There is mention of this world, of heaven, and of the still higher regions. But the Ṛg-Vedic poets are practically silent over the question of a hell. Thus the world was to them a stage in the progress of man's soul along his spiritual path. There is no conflict between man's future and his present. There is no conflict between *dharma, artha,* and *kāma.* Man's life was considered a harmonious unit.

From the Brāhmaṇa literature one can understand the high moral level of the ancient Vedic *ṛṣis.* Here also one finds the optimism of the *ṛṣis* regarding the life of man in this world. The entire life of man was organized with a single objective, namely, the common good of man. The Brāhmaṇas contain elaborate rules for the performance of sacrifices. There are many places where the beneficial fruits accruing from the performance of sacrifices are mentioned. There are also various legends and anecdotes. All these sections of the Brāhmaṇa literature have a great value to the student of ancient Indian culture. Here one finds the life of great men reflected as in a mirror. The relations between the various strata in the social life of the nation, the relation between gods and men, the relation between this world and the higher world, all such things one can learn from the Brāhmaṇa literature. There are also philosophical speculations, theological teachings, fantastic and hair-splitting textual interpretations, and various other points from which one gets a clear view of the intellectual level of the Vedic *ṛṣis*; and no impartial student can but be impressed by the high intellectual level of the nation at that time.

While the Saṁhitās and the Brāhmaṇas are related to sacrifices in the main, the third division of the Vedic literature, namely, the Upaniṣads, is concerned with *jñāna* as contrasted with *karma.* Through sacrifices one attains to *svarga* (heaven), and there is a return to this world after a period.

But through *jñāna* one gets to a position, a state transcending all limitations, from which there is no return. That condition is far higher than the normal condition, and accordingly, in a description of such a condition, there is the necessity of introducing a tone of pessimism regarding the life of man in this world and in *svarga*. Although there is no mention of this world being in itself a misery, yet it is an abode of misery in comparison with the higher state. This pessimism is relative and not absolute. It follows the traditional attitude of the Indian mind that an adverse remark is not meant to condemn what is criticized, but only to praise what is recommended. Although one finds a stern silence in the Saṁhitās regarding *vairāgya* (dispassion) and *sannyāsa* (renunciation), one meets with these in the Upaniṣads quite frequently.

The world and its entanglements are not matters that man can throw away at will. One has to go through the course of one's life in this world and in the next world. If one tries to discard one's responsibilities, one is only delaying one's attainment of the final goal. It is the untimely *sannyāsa* that the *ṛṣis* have condemned. The conflict arises only if one tries to enter *sannyāsa* when one has to be in the *karma* stage. Both the Mīmāṁsakas, who developed the *karma* doctrine, and the Vedāntins, who developed the doctrine of *jñāna* and *sannyāsa*, accepted the whole Vedic literature as a single, harmonious unit comprising the Saṁhitās and the Brāhmaṇas. And the Upaniṣads are, according to both schools, only the latter portion of the Brāhmaṇas. At the time of performing the sacrifice, the purpose of the Upaniṣads is to enable the sacrificer to understand his real nature. And so far as the cultivation of *jñāna* is concerned, the purpose of the two other earlier sections, namely, the Saṁhitās and the main Brāhmaṇa portion, is to make an aspirant after *jñāna* understand the stage through which he has to pass, to become eligible for it. *Karma* and *upāsanā* purify the mind and the sense-organs and thereby make it easier for the aspirant to attain *jñāna*.

Although the Upaniṣadic texts are later than the Vedas and the Brāhmaṇas, yet the culture represented by the two sets of texts is the same; it is homogeneous and harmonious. As a matter of fact, the special feature of the development of Indian culture is that there has been a continuous growth. The Brāhmaṇas interpret the sacrificial system of the original Vedic texts, while the Upaniṣads interpret their philosophy. The Upaniṣadic doctrines of an eternal soul, of heaven being the fruit of sacrifice and temporary in nature, of a return to this physical world after the enjoyment of the fruits of one's good deeds in a higher world, of the final goal being attainable only through knowledge—all these are based on the Vedic doctrines. There may be a wide gap of time between the Vedas and the

Upaniṣads; but there is no gap in the development of religion and philosophy. There may be expansion and progress; but there is no departure.

It is very doubtful if the Upaniṣads meant a total termination of the soul's association with the body in the state of final release (*videhamukti*). It is most probably only an expansion of the scope of man's awareness that is meant there. The body is no bar to life in a higher world. It is true that in the passage of the soul from existence in the physical world to *svarga* after death, a new body is needed for enjoyment there, as the physical body is burnt. But in the course of the alternation between these two worlds, one develops one's inner powers and the worlds above come within the awareness of the person. The passage 'That is the highest stage of Viṣṇu; the wise ones see it ever' (*R.V.*, I.22.20) has a meaning. The wise men are among the Vedic *ṛṣis*. And the Vedic *ṛṣis* knew about that highest world of Viṣṇu while in the physical body. Whether or not there is final release without the dissolution of the physical body is a point of conflict in later philosophy also.

CHARACTERISTICS OF VEDIC ṚṢIS

We must also take note that the Ṛg-Vedic *ṛṣis* were different from those mentioned in the Upaniṣads and the Purāṇas. In the Upaniṣads, the *ṛṣis* were those who had practically abandoned their attachment to the affairs of the world and had taken their abode in the forests. But in the Ṛg-Vedic literature, the *ṛṣis* were the advanced citizens of the period, the gifted poets. They had not abandoned their interest in the problems of life in this world. They lived as members of the family, propitiating gods with their sacrifices and with their prayers. They prayed for family happiness; they prayed for heroic children and grandchildren and also for success in social life.

The *ṛṣis* of the Upaniṣads continue in the Purāṇas also. But none of them are *sannyāsins*. Many of them lived with their families in forest-settlements and had children. And even this order of *ṛṣis* came to an end with the Purāṇas. Vasiṣṭha was prominent in the time of Rāma and Vedavyāsa in the time of Yudhiṣṭhira. Vaiśampāyana was associated with Parīkṣit and Janamejaya, who ruled the country in succession after Yudhiṣṭhira. The *ṛṣi* order disappeared after Janamejaya's time. The Purāṇas do not make any mention of *ṛṣis* in the time of Candragupta Maurya or Puṣyamitra Śuṅga or the Gupta emperors. Unless we note this point, we cannot have any idea of the culture of the Vedic period. It is a culture nourished by the Vedic *ṛṣis*, and these Vedic *ṛṣis* should not be confounded with those of the Upaniṣads and the Purāṇas.

CASTES

It is generally believed that there was no caste system in the early Vedic period. The first mention of the four castes in the *Ṛg-Veda* is in the famous *Puruṣa-sūkta*. And this is considered to be a later hymn. There is the word '*pañcajana*' appearing in the *Ṛg-Veda*. According to traditional Indian interpretation, this means the fivefold nation, divided into the four castes and the fifth caste of the Niṣādas. There is no doubt that there was a gradation of the people in the civic life of the nation. This had reference to the social and the spiritual life of the nation also. Perhaps the caste system was not so rigid at that time as in later times, when the nation had lost its life and power of adaptation. There is no literature of that period corresponding to the Dharma-śāstras of the later period where we find rigid rules regarding the conduct of the various castes and about their duties, prerogatives, and disabilities. But a division of the nation into different gradations according to the capacities and aptitudes of the individuals is a feature seen even in Iranian literature, and also in the literature of other Indo-European nations. Therefore something like a caste system must have existed even at the earliest times in India. Perhaps it was more elastic.

Migration from caste to caste was not unknown. Kṣatriyas became Brāhmaṇas as in the case of Gṛtsamada and Viśvāmitra. There is also mention of Kṣatriya girls marrying Brāhmaṇas. Sukanyā, daughter of King Śaryāta married Cyavana, and Rathavīti's daughter married Śyāvāśva. In the Upaniṣads there is the famous story of Satyakāma. The teacher asked only for the *gotra* (lineage) of Satyakāma. There is no indication that the teacher would not have accepted the boy if he were not a Brāhmaṇa. Only, the teacher was pleased to find that the boy was truthful, a characteristic of the Brāhmaṇa group. The acceptance of Gṛtsamada and Viśvāmitra as Brāhmaṇas, though originally Kṣatriyas, shows that it was a difference of function, and not strictly a difference of parentage, that determined the caste, and that capacity was the deciding factor in the gradation of the nation into various groups in the Vedic times.

POSITION OF WOMEN

There is no hint to show that women as such occupied a position lower than that of men in Vedic society. In intellectual life they occupied the same position as men. Some of the Vedic poets were women. There were women warriors who fought bravely in war. There were also women philosophers. Both gods and goddesses occupied the same position and rank in the religion of India. This complete equality between men and women is found in all parts of the Vedic literature, from the Saṁhitās to the

Upaniṣads. There are some references to hetairae in the Vedic texts. There seems to have been no sort of opprobrium attached to such women.

ARTS, CRAFTS, AND SOCIAL LIFE

There were various kinds of industries, especially spinning of fine yarns and weaving. The women wore very brilliant and fine clothes. Gold was profusely used for ornaments. Various kinds of gems were used as decorations for the body, both by men and women. Many kinds of weapons were made with metals.

Chariot-building must have become an art in those days. There are many places where poetry is spoken of as comparable to making a chariot. Chariots had various kinds of carvings, and gold and gems were used for decoration. The chariots were drawn by horses. No mention is found in the Vedas of aerial traffic, such as *vimānas* mentioned in the later literature. All the gods moved about in chariots drawn by animals.

The *Atharva-Veda* refers to three kinds of roads, what is fit for chariots, what is fit for carts, and what is fit for foot-passengers. Chariots were drawn by horses, and carts by bullocks. There is no mention of other modes of conveyance like palanquins in the Vedas. But the Vedic people were a sea-faring nation, and they had ships that crossed the oceans. They were propelled by oars. There is no mention of the use of sails for propelling a ship. What they crossed with a ship cannot be rivers, as there is reference to the ships being out for a few days on the waters.

Besides horses, cows, and bullocks, there were dogs and mules as domesticated animals. Different kinds of birds are also mentioned in the Vedas. Reptiles, wolves, and other wild and ferocious animals were also known to the Vedic Aryans.

The Vedic Aryans had good brick-built homes. There were villages and also towns. The people were divided into various clans. There were kings at the head of the various small States, and they were in frequent conflict with one another. Sometimes they formed into rival groups, some clans allying themselves into groups against other similar groups of allied clans.

In spite of this political division, and even political feud, the Vedic Aryans had a common culture. They worshipped common gods. Their secular life was also uniform. Although the poets were under the patronage of different kings, they formed themselves into a harmonious unit. They were proud of the achievements of their forefathers and tried to keep up the traditions.

The extent of the area occupied by the Vedic Aryans cannot be definitely ascertained. They knew the rivers of the Punjab and also the

Gaṅgā and the Yamunā. The Sindhu and the Gaṅgā systems must have been the centre of their civilization; but the other parts of India may not have been unknown to them. Perhaps they knew the countries to the north-west, where probably was situated the mountain Mūjavant, mentioned in the Vedic literature as the original home of true *soma*. The large Dravidian element in the Vedic language may be taken as evidence of the Vedic Aryans having known South India and being in some sort of political and cultural relation with the people of the South. Certainly they knew the peoples to the west of India.

The story of how Śunaḥśepa was offered to Varuṇa and how by prayer to the various gods his life was saved from slaughter, as mentioned in the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, is taken as an evidence to show that human sacrifice was practised at that time. But the whole trend of the narration of the story in the Vedic literature shows only an abhorrence to the practice, which might have been common among the less civilized sections of the nation at that time. There is found no sort of sanction for such a practice in the whole of the Vedic literature.

Nothing definite can be said about child-marriage at that time. There is a hymn describing the departure of the bride to the house of the bridegroom from the house of the parents after marriage. What one is inclined to assume after reading the hymn is that the girl at the time of the marriage was already of age. There is the mention of the marriage of Sūryā with Aśvins. This also gives the impression that the marriage took place when the girl was grown up. Sūryā accepted her spouse from among the suitors after their competition in a chariot race. Such a selection by the girl of her husband is impossible if she is not of an age when she could use her own discretion.

There is mention of evil habits in society like gambling and the drinking of intoxicating beverages. There is a hymn devoted to a condemnation of gambling and its evil effects on man, family, and society. The whole spirit of the hymn is one of condemnation of the practice in society. But recreations like horse-racing and chariot-racing were not condemned in those days. Even gods were indulging in such chariot races.

There is a general notion that *soma* was an intoxicating drink of the nation in the Vedic times. But there is mention of another drink, *surā*, which is definitely stated as having evil effects on the minds of men, a sort of stupefaction of the mind (*durmada*). The word '*mada*' used along with *soma*, means only great joy and there is no indication of *mada* being any sort of mental stupefaction. *Mada* is caused by the presence of sons and grandsons, of wealth and other covetable objects. It is very doubtful whether the word '*durmada*' (evil intoxication) denotes any condemnation

of the habit of drinking in Vedic times. *Surā* is used along with *soma*, or as a substitute for *soma*, in some of the sacrifices. It cannot be a condemned article, if it is offered to the gods along with, or as a substitute for, *soma*.

The killing of animals was not prohibited in those days. The Vedic Aryans, including the Brāhmaṇas, ate fish, meat, and even beef. A distinguished guest was honoured with beef served at a meal. Although the Vedic Aryans ate beef, milch-cows were not killed. One of the words that designated cow was *aghnyā* (what shall not be killed). But a guest was called a *goghna* (one for whom a cow is killed). It is only bulls, barren cows, and calves that were killed.

The Gṛhya-Sūtras prescribe different kinds of meat to be given to children at the first feeding ceremony, for different sorts of results. Mutton, flesh of different kinds of birds, and other forms of meat were freely eaten by the highest castes in those days, and still they were the most spiritual nation in the world.

THE FOUR ĀŚRAMAS

The central core of Hindu ethics is the *varṇāśrama-dharma*. Something has already been said about *varṇa* or the caste system. There are four *āśramas* or stages in life. They are *brahmacarya*, *gārhasthya*, *vānaprasthya*, and *sannyāsa*. But all the four stages had not developed in the Vedic period. All had to undergo the first stage, that of *brahmacarya*. There were *snātakas*, who continued as bachelors even after their *snāna* or ceremonial bathing after the period of obligatory education, removing the marks of a *brahmacārin*. There is no mention of *sannyāsins* in the Vedic literature. In the Upaniṣads we come across *ṛṣis* who had their abode in the forests. They could be only Vaikhānasas ; they were in the stage that can be designated *vānaprasthya* in the fourfold *āśrama* scheme. None of the *ṛṣis* in the Upaniṣads or in the Purāṇas were *sannyāsins*.

SCOPE AND IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION

Education was obligatory for all. There is the famous statement in the Veda that every one should receive education (*svādhyāyo adhyetavyaḥ*). According to traditional interpretation, this meant that all children should study the entire Vedas. But in the course of time, men's capabilities diminished, and they confined their obligatory study to one Veda. And Veda meant the Saṁhitā, the Brāhmaṇa, and the Vedāṅgas. The Kalpa-Sūtras formed a part of the Vedāṅgas, and Dharma-Sūtras were parts of the Kalpa-Sūtras. The Dharma-Sūtras dealt with civic duties, as distinct from the rules relating to *śrauta* (scriptural) sacrifices and rituals dealt with in the Śrauta-Sūtras and the domestic sacrifices and rituals dealt with in the

Gṛhya-Sūtras. Thus both religious and temporal laws formed part of Vedic study.

The list of subjects which Nārada enumerates to Sanatkumāra in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (I.1.2) may be regarded as the normal equipment of an educated man. There are indications to show that the students studied poetry also. They studied the text of the Vedas, and recited them with the proper accent and intonation. They studied grammar too, and were conversant with the general meaning of the texts.

This education was divided into an obligatory part and an optional part. After the obligatory education, there was the ceremonial bath. Then students could continue in the *āśrama* (retreat) of the teacher and prosecute further critical study. They could perform the ceremonial bath after that further study. Perhaps we can compare them with the school education and the university education of modern times. The former was compulsory, while the latter was only optional.

In the beginning, this education was common to all citizens, irrespective of their caste. As a matter of fact, the caste distinction came in only after they chose their avocation. It was not a hereditary privilege or a hereditary disability. But the Gṛhya-Sūtras prescribe different ages for the initiation of the children belonging to different castes. At that time, therefore, heredity must have made its appearance in the differentiation of castes. The restriction of Vedic studies and performance of sacrifices to a particular caste must be a latter-day deterioration in the civic life of the Aryans. It is not an aspect of Vedic culture.

The aim of education was that of equipping the student to play his part as an honoured citizen. It is only later that the study of the Vedas was made a part of the sacrificial rites with *svarga* as the goal, or as a part of the study of the Vedānta to attain final release. That is how the *Mīmāṁsā-Sūtras* and the *Vedānta-Sūtras* interpret the Vedic passage that all should study the Vedas. There is a very interesting passage in the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (I.11) that throws considerable light on the educational policy of those times. After the student has finished his education, the teacher exhorts the disciple who is going back home to 'speak the truth' and to 'lead a virtuous life' and further advises him as to his duties and obligations as a member of society. In the course of this instruction, there is no indication of using what the student has studied either for the performance of sacrifices with *svarga* as the goal or for the investigation into the problem of the Absolute with a view to attaining final release. The whole trend of the final instruction is that he should lead an honoured and useful life as a citizen. He should marry and continue the line of his family; he should give money to his teacher, when he has begun earning. He should pay attention to

truth and virtue in life. He should ask the wise if he has any doubts, and he should try to follow in their footsteps if he has any uncertainties regarding conduct.

Education was given free. Kings and rich men contributed freely to the establishment of the *āśramas* where the children received their education. When students left the schools and began earning their livelihood, they were expected, but in no way compelled, to contribute their share, to the extent to which they were capable, for the maintenance of such *āśramas*. A disciplined life and devotion to study were all that the teacher expected as the true return for the education they received.

LIFE AND TRAINING IN THE ĀŚRAMAS

In such *āśramas*, all lived as equals. There was no difference between rich and poor children. The life was simple and industrious. But there was nothing that could be called Spartan mortification of the body. The students were happy and contented. The atmosphere which Kālidāsa, Vālmīki, and Vyāsa describe as prevailing in the *āśramas* with a large number of students reflects the normal condition of life in such institutions even in Vedic times.

The parents had no worry about the education of their children, and the teachers too had no difficulty about the maintenance of their institutions. Money was available in plenty for such institutions. But that does not mean that the education of children was no concern of the parents. While the teachers were fully responsible, the parents took interest in the education and made occasional contacts with their children. Sometimes, the father himself used to teach the son, though life under a teacher was preferred.

Most of such educational institutions were *āśramas* of *ṛṣis* in the forests, which, however, were not far off, inaccessible jungles. They were either the gardens and groves of rich men or the banks of rivers and lakes on the highways between cities, easily accessible either on foot or by some kind of conveyance. The kings visited such *āśramas* in their chariots. An afternoon drive was enough for the kings to reach the *āśramas*, as is seen from the *Raghuvaṁśa* (I) where it is found that Dilīpa started after his midday meal and reached the *āśrama* of Vasiṣṭha before sunset.

In those days there were more forest regions than in later times. The kings protected the *āśramas* from wild animals. The residences also were more widely spread out in the country parts. In the afternoon hours, the students visited the residences of rich persons asking for alms for the maintenance of the institution. There must have been such institutions in the villages and cities too. Every household of a scholar was also an educational institution where many students lived as members of his family.

Wealthy people and people belonging to noble families also acted as teachers. Teaching was the most honoured profession in those days. The teacher, the man of wisdom, controlled the life of the nation. Both wealth and political power bowed before wisdom.

INFLUENCE OF VEDIC CIVILIZATION

In the period of the *Ṛg-Veda*, the Aryans had already reached a high state of civilization. In knowledge, in power, and in social organization they had attained a high level. Vedic literature does not mark the starting point of a civilization; on the contrary, it marks the beginning of the decadence of a high civilization. The Indians have ever been conscious of a highly civilized past. In the whole history of India, the Vedic age has been recognized as the ideal, and the attempt in all subsequent ages has been to approximate the life of man to the conditions of the Vedic age. Thus in later periods everything that was valuable in man's life was traced back to the Vedas. Philosophy, religion, codes of conduct, all the sciences—everything was traced to the Vedas.

The Purāṇas describe the lives of Vedic and pre-Vedic kings and *ṛṣis*. The entire mythology of the later period is based on that of the Vedic period. All the stories narrated in later Purāṇas about Viṣṇu, Śiva, and Indra have their roots in the Vedic mythology. The main philosophical doctrines are based on Vedic conceptions. Religious development is Vedic in tone from the beginning. In short, the entire Sanskrit literature of the later period records the attempt of ancient Indians to understand the Vedic civilization, to revive that culture, and to approximate their lives to the ideals of the Vedic civilization.

To understand this civilization, the present times are not quite suited. Modern ideas are in conflict with those of ancient India. Whatever be the value attached to the Vedic literature by modern scholars, whatever be the stage of civilization represented by the Vedas as judged by modern sciences and modern standards, no one can deny the fact that the Vedas satisfied the needs of the intellect, of the imagination, and of the emotion of a great nation for a long period, extending over at least three thousand years, and the records of that nation in the fields of intellect and imagination are not below the achievements of any other nation that has appeared on the face of the earth till now.

13

VEDIC SOCIETY

THIS chapter presents a picture of Vedic society, in its social, economic, and political aspects, from the early Vedic period to the end of the age of the later Saṁhitās and Brāhmaṇas (*c.* 2500 B.C. to *c.* 1000 B.C.). Our evidence is all literary; yet it enables us to have a fairly good picture.

FAMILY

It will be convenient to begin with the family. The *Mahābhārata* refers to traces of promiscuity in marital relations in ancient India, when it narrates how Śvetaketu enjoined that there should be no laxity in conjugal relations.[1] The *Ṛg-Veda* also occasionally refers to women without guardians going astray. But the perusal of the marriage hymn (*R.V.*, X. 85) shows that the sanctity of the institution of marriage had already been recognized by the society, and the lapses, which we notice here and there, are such as are difficult to eliminate in all times and in all societies. The tie of marriage was a binding force all through life.

There are no indications of divorce, but there is evidence to show that levirate and widow marriages were prevailing. Naturally, the custom of *satī* did not exist in the Vedic age, though the funeral ritual, according to some scholars, contains traces of its prevalence in pre-Vedic period.[2] Monogamy was the usual rule, but polygamy was permitted and practised by the rich and the ruling classes. Polyandry was unknown. Marriage was not regarded as a secular contract; it was a religious ritual which enjoined the husband to regard his wife as a god-given gift. But the bride purchase was not unknown; the bridegroom in such cases was, however, held in low esteem. Dowry also is sometimes referred to. The *kṣātra* (by conquest) or *rākṣasa* (by abduction) form of marriage occasionally prevailed, as when Vimada married a bride won in war. *Gāndharva* or love marriages were not uncommon; there are several hymns in the Vedic literature, which were used as charms to secure success in love-making.[3]

Child marriage was unknown to the Vedic age; brides were in the bloom of youth at the time of wedlock, and well trained to assume full responsibility of the management of the household; for the hope is

[1] *Tadā prabhṛti maryādā sthiteyamiti naḥ śrutam,*
Vyuccarantyāḥ patiṁ nārya adya prabhṛti pātakam.

[2] *A.V.*, XVIII.3.1.

[3] *A.V.*, II.30; III.25; IV.5; etc.

expressed in the marriage hymn that they may rule even over their parents-in-law.[4] Being grown up, the prospective bride and bridegroom themselves often settled the marriage. The *Ṛg-Veda* refers to the lucky maidens who, being beautiful, could settle their own matches.[5] Consummation of the marriage followed the completion of its ritual.

The Vedic family was of the patriarchal type, matriarchate being unknown to Vedic society. It was a joint family consisting of the father, the grandfather, sons, nephews, and their wives. The patriarch controlled the family property and could theoretically divide it in any way he liked; but normally the division was made equitably. The stories of Śunaḥśepa and Ṛjrāśva suggest that the father had the power over the life and limb of the children; but these rights, if once conceded, had gone into desuetude in the Vedic period. For the father most frequently figures as the standard of comparison when kindness is to be extolled.[6] The father was expected to deal most kindly with the sons, who were expected to be most obedient and courteous to their parents. The education of children was a personal concern of the father, and he initiated them into Vedic studies and family crafts. There were rituals for securing intellectual pre-eminence and success in debates.[7]

POSITION OF WOMEN

The position of women in the Vedic age was on the whole much more satisfactory than in the later periods. The birth of a daughter was no doubt not as welcome as the birth of a son, but there is no evidence to show that girls were exposed as unwanted babes. They received education like boys and went through the *brahmacarya* discipline; the *Atharva-Veda* observes how a bride had no chance of a good match, if she had not been educated as a *brahmacāriṇī*. The custom of the *upanayana* of girls prevailed down to the Sūtra period, though it had then become a mere formality in the case of the majority. Women studied the Vedic literature like men, and some of them, like Lopāmudrā, Ghoṣā, and Sikatā-Nivāvarī, figure among the authors of the Vedic hymns. They had also the right to perform the Vedic rituals by themselves; a Ṛg-Vedic hymn (VIII.91.1) describes how a maiden could take a *soma* twig and offer it by herself as a sacrifice to Indra. Vedic sacrifices were performed jointly by the husband and the wife, and the singing of the Vedic hymns during the sacrificial session was long considered as the most appropriate function of the wife, though in the

[4] *R.V.*, X.85.46; *A.V.*, XIV.1.43.
[5] *Bhadrā vadhūrbhavati yatsupeśāḥ, svayaṁ sā mitraṁ vanute jane cit* (X.27.12).
[6] *R.V.*, I.1.9.
[7] *A.V.*, I.1; VII.12.

later Brāhmaṇa period, it was assigned to the *udgātṛs.*[8] Women performing the *sandhyā* or offering sacrifices by themselves, unaccompanied by their husbands, figure as late as the time of the *Rāmāyaṇa* (II.20.15).

Brides, being well trained and grown up at the time of their marriage, were naturally regarded as equals of their husbands; the term *'dampatī'* would suggest that the husband and wife were regarded as the joint heads of the household. The patriarchal traditions of the society, however, naturally invested the husband with greater powers in the management of the household. A hymn in the *Ṛg-Veda* (X.34.2) no doubt suggests that the husband could stake his wife in gambling; but this obviously refers to the lower strata of the society and the procedure was condemned by the social conscience, as the hymn itself shows.

Women had control over their *pāriṇāyya* (gifts and property etc. received at the time of marriage), which appears to have corresponded to the *strīdhana* of the later age; but the bulk of the family property was under the control and management of the patriarch or the husband. Later Vedic texts expressly declare that women have no right of inheritance as they are weak.[9] An exception, however, was made in favour of the brotherless daughter, who was allowed to inherit the patrimony. This was, however, no unmixed blessing for her; for youths were reluctant to marry such a maiden, as they apprehended that the first son of the marriage might be claimed for himself by his maternal grandfather.

There are no traces of the seclusion of women in Vedic society. They could move freely even in the company of their husbands or lovers. The hope expressed in the marriage hymn that the bride would shine as a debator in public assemblies[10] proves their participation in public life; they usually occupied a prominent place in social gatherings, lending charm to them by their graceful dress. Love marriages referred to in several passages also attest to the freedom of movement granted to grown-up maidens. There is evidence to show that women followed a number of professions like those of the dyers, embroiderers, and basket-makers, which also would indicate the absence of the *purdah*. The teaching profession followed by women down to the Sūtra period and the part taken by scholars like Gārgī in mixed public debates would also attest to the non-existence of the segregation of women. Women's participation in public meetings and debates, however, became less and less common in the later Vedic period.[11]

[8] *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, XIV.3.1.35.

[9] *Tasmāt striyo nirindriyā adāyādīḥ* (*Taittirīya Saṁhitā*, VI.5.8.2); cf. also *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, IV.4.2.13.

[10] *Ṛ.V.*, X.85.26.

[11] *Tasmātpumāṁsaḥ sabhāṁ yanti na striyaḥ* (*Maitrāyaṇī Saṁhitā*, IV.7.4).

ĀŚRAMAS OR STAGES OF LIFE

There were some ascetics in the Vedic age, but the ideal of renunciation was not popular in society. Marriage was regarded, not as an impediment but as a help in religious progress; one who was unmarried could not perform Vedic sacrifices and win heaven.[12] The theory of the threefold debt that an individual owed to the gods, ancestors, and sages is to be found enunciated in the later Vedic period; the debt to the ancestors, regarded as indispensable, could be liquidated only by marriage. The outlook on life was *pravṛttipara* (this-worldly); the Vedic sages are seen praying for sons, wealth, and victory; they never express any feeling of dissatisfaction with this world and life, or give vent to a desire to escape from life and to retire into the calm solitude of the forests. Though there existed some persons in society who sought to win occult powers by penances,[13] the ideal of the four stages of life (*āśramas*) had not yet been developed. It was in the period of the Upaniṣads that the path of renunciation became popular and gave rise first to three and later to four *āśramas*—that of the student, the householder, the recluse, and the monk.

CLASSES IN SOCIETY—ĀRYAS AND DĀSAS

Let us now consider the social organization. Linguistic evidence supplied by comparative philology does not indicate the emergence of any classes in the Indo-European period. But the Avesta shows that in the Indo-Iranian period, the Aryan society was divided into four classes—priests, warriors, farmers, and artisans. There was no class corresponding to the Śūdras of the *Ṛg-Veda*, but their place was taken by that of the Dahaes, who were the aborigines of ancient Persia. In the Vedic period, we have ample evidence to show that the Āryas and Dasyus or Dāsas were the two main groups in society, sharply distinguished from each other in several respects. The Dasyus differed from the Āryas in language; their language appeared to the Āryas as unintelligible. There was the difference in religion; the Āryas were sacrificers and fire-worshippers; the Dasyus were phallus-worshippers, and did not follow the ritual of fire-worship. There were ethnical and physiognomical differences; the Dasyus had flat noses (*anāsas*), and above all their colour was black, as contrasted with that of the Āryas, who were fair. The Dasyus or Dāsas constituted a 'colour', and the *Ṛg-Veda* describes how Indra killed the Dasyus and protected the 'Ārya colour', or how he trampled down in the caves the 'Dāsa colour'.[14] A number of Dāsa chiefs, like Ilībiśa and Dhumi, and a number of Dāsa

[12] *Ayajñiyo vaiṣa yo'patnīkaḥ* (*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*).
[13] *R.V.*, X.136.
[14] *Hatvī dasyūn prāryaṁ varṇamāvat* (III.34.9); *Yo dāsaṁ varṇamadharaṁ guhākaḥ* (II.12.4).

tribes, like the Ajas, the Sigrus, etc., are mentioned by name, and the Āryas were usually at war with them. In the course of time, however, *rapprochement* was gradually taking place. The Āryas began to have Śūdra or Dāsa mistresses, if not wives; and when they began to fight among themselves, they did not disdain to have alliances with non-Aryan chiefs, as was done by King Sudās in the famous *dāśarājña* (ten kings) war.

Classes were gradually springing up in the Aryan society. Agriculture and cattle-rearing were the chief professions. The other professions referred to in the *Ṛg-Veda* are those of the blacksmith, the goldsmith, the physician, the carpenter, the weaver, the tanner, the stone-cutter, the basket-maker, the warrior, and the priest.

HAD CLASSES DEVELOPED INTO CASTES?

Whether any of these professions had crystallized into the castes of the later period is a question upon which there is a sharp difference of opinion. Zimmer, Weber, and Muir have maintained that there was no caste system in the Vedic period, while others like Geldner, Oldenberg, Macdonell, and Keith have held the opposite view. Let us see what the available evidence indicates.

The names of the four castes of the later period, Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya, and Śūdra, are expressly mentioned with their special characteristics in the famous Ṛg-Vedic *Puruṣa-sūkta* (X.90). This is considered a late hymn, but in another hymn (VIII.35.16-18), which is not a late one, prayer is offered to Aśvins to promote the prosperity of the Brahma, the Kṣattra, and the Viś and secure intellectual progress, military pre-eminence, and cattle prosperity. This passage also presupposes the division of the Aryans into three classes, Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, and Vaiśya.

There is, however, hardly any evidence to show that these three principal classes had become hereditary. They appear to be the names of professions, which could be followed by any Aryan according to his inclination. In the first place it is to be noted that had the Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas, and Śūdras developed into rigid castes in the Vedic period, they would have been mentioned certainly more than twice in the *Ṛg-Veda*, as is actually the case. It is worth noting that the priest is referred to not invariably by the terms '*brahma*' or '*brāhmaṇa*'; he is more frequently described as *kāru, vipra, kavi, vedhas*, etc. The warrior is usually described as a *rājanya* and rarely as a Kṣatriya, and the term '*viśaḥ*' denotes in several places Aryan citizens in general rather than the farmers or merchants in particular.[15] Professions were not hereditary; one sage tells us how he was a poet, his father a physician, and his maternal grandfather a stone-cutter.

[15] Cf. *Ṛ.V.*, I.25.1.

Another implores Indra that he should be made a ruler over men, failing that a priest, and failing that a rich person.[16] It is thus clear that even in priestly families, the profession was not hereditary, and there was nothing disreputable for a sage to pray that he may be elevated to the position of a king or a rich merchant. An orthodox pundit of the present age can never make such a prayer. Heredity was not highly valued; Kavaṣa, the son of a slave girl, could become a sage. The *Ṛg-Veda* praises heredity only in one passage.[17] It is therefore clear that classes existed in the Ṛg-Vedic society, but they had not yet developed into castes.

CLASSES IN LATER VEDIC PERIOD

In the age of the later Saṁhitās, Brāhmaṇas, and Upaniṣads, the classes continued to be fluid. The *Kāṭhaka Saṁhitā* (XXX.1) points out how no enquiry need be made about the parentage of a Brāhmaṇa, who is a learned scholar. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (X.4.1.10) describes how some of the sons of Śyāparṇa Sāyakāyana became Brāhmaṇas, some Kṣatriyas, and some Vaiśyas. Priests often accompanied their patron kings to the battle-field in the Vedic period and Kṣatriyas often sacrificed for others, as is shown by the case of Devāpi, who, though a Kṣatriya, sacrificed for his younger brother, who had ascended the throne. The view of the Smṛti period that teaching of the Vedas was an exclusive privilege of the Brāhmaṇas was not current in the Vedic age. Some of the authors of the Vedic hymns were Kṣatriyas. The Brāhmaṇical tradition ascribes the whole of the third *maṇḍala* to Viśvāmitra, and expressly describes him as a sage and king combined. In the age of the Upaniṣads, we come across several Kṣatriya teachers of *Brahmavidyā*. They taught it not only to Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas, but even to Brāhmaṇas, at least on some occasions. Thus the Brāhmaṇa Gārgya Bālāki is seen approaching King Ajātaśatru for being enlightened about the nature of Brahman; Brāhmaṇa Gautama serves as a disciple of King Pravāhaṇa Jaivali, because the spiritual theory known to him had not till then been ever taught outside the Kṣatriya circles.[18]

It is interesting to note that the Dharma-Sūtras (*c.* 500 B.C.) permit a Brāhmaṇa to become a disciple of a Kṣatriya, if it was necessary to do so. It would not be therefore fair to dismiss the evidence of the Upaniṣads on the theory that the kings referred to by them are instances of rulers willing to be flattered as teachers of philosophy, when really they knew hardly much about it. There can be no doubt that Gautama Buddha, Mahāvīra, and Makkhali Gosāla were Kṣatriya teachers of philosophy who founded

[16] *Ibid.*, III.43.5.
[17] *Brahmaputra iva savaneṣu śaṁsasi* (II.43.2).
[18] *Bṛ. U.*, II.1; *Chā. U.*, V.3.

famous sects. Why should we then disbelieve the evidence of the Upaniṣads and persist in thinking that the kings mentioned by them like Ajātaśatru and Pravāhaṇa Jaivali did not belong to the category of the Buddha and Mahāvīra but were elevated to the status of philosophers and teachers by the gratefulness of their protégés?

The principle of heredity was receiving greater and greater recognition in the age of the later Saṁhitās, Brāhmaṇas, and Upaniṣads. It was, however, still open for a Kṣatriya to be a teacher of the Vedas and Vedānta or to officiate at the sacrifice of another. There is also a solitary passage enjoining a ritual for the benefit of a Vaiśya who had learnt the Vedas, but was not prospering. This may suggest that the Vaiśyas also could occasionally become teachers of the Vedas. It is thus clear that there was no rigidity of professions, nor were they hereditary. Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, and Vaiśyas were still classes and had not yet developed into castes down to the end of the Vedic period.

INTERCASTE MARRIAGES AND DINNERS

Since classes had not yet developed into castes, the question did not arise as to whether intercaste marriages were to be permitted or not. The Aryans were not averse to taking wives from the Śūdras also, though there was a wide gulf between the two classes. Among the *traivarṇikas* (upper three castes), intermarriages were not unusual; the son of the sage Atri was married to a Kṣatriya princess, and the wife of the sage Agastya, Lopāmudrā, hailed from the Kṣatriya caste.

Interdining was common; only there was a taboo upon the food cooked or touched by the Śūdra, if it was to be used for the sacrifice. It is interesting to note that the Sūtras permit food cooked by the Śūdra even for sacrificial purposes, if he had been shaved and bathed earlier.

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS: AGRICULTURE

Agriculture and cattle-rearing were the chief productive occupations in Vedic society. Of these, the latter was almost the exclusive profession of the society in the nomadic stage. That stage was passed before the Vedic age, but still we find great importance attached to herds of cattle. An interesting hymn in the *Atharva-Veda* shows that non-possession of cows was regarded as a great misfortune; a rite is described there to avert it. Elephants were also being tamed in the later Vedic period, but were not yet used for war. Agriculture was the mainstay of economic stability, and the profession was regarded as a respectable one; the gambler, for instance, is advised to take it up to improve his condition. Canals were also excavated to help agriculture. The various stages of agriculture such as ploughing,

sowing in furrows, cutting of corn and making bundles of sheaves, and thrashing and winnowing are referred to, and rituals were prescribed for some of them. Prayers for success in agriculture are not infrequent. Barley, wheat, beans, and sesamum are the cereals referred to. Apālā refers to her father's fields; it would thus appear that individual ownership in cultivable lands was not unknown. But the gift of land was not approved, showing that though a person could use a piece of land, he could not transfer it at his own sweet will.

TRADE AND COMMERCE

Trade and commerce do not appear to have been the forte of the Vedic Aryans; they show great jealousy of the Paṇis, who were expert traders. Prayers for success in trade are, however, often met with.[19] Roads were primitive, and bullocks, pack-horses, camels, and waggons were used for transport. River navigation was also resorted to, but the knowledge of the sea seems to have been far from intimate. We know little of trade organization, but the *śreṣṭhins*, referred to in the later Vedic literature, may have been the chiefs of trade guilds, as in later times. There was no metallic currency. Cows were the means of exchange, and one poet enquires whether any one would purchase his Indra (image) for ten cows. The term '*niṣka*', which later meant a gold coin, occurs in the *Ṛg-Veda*, but there it denotes a gold ornament. Silver was practically unknown; so there could have been no silver currency. There are no references to any copper coins. Contracts of sale are sometimes referred to. Failure to pay a debt would often reduce a person to slavery.

CRAFTS AND PROFESSIONS

The *Ṛg-Veda* refers to a number of professions. Smiths, carpenters, physicians, potters, weavers, tanners, and grinders of corn are expressly mentioned. It is interesting to note that these professions were not regarded as plebeian. Ṛbhus and Aśvins, we are told, were originally human beings, but were later elevated to divinity on account of their skill in craftsmanship and medicine respectively. The status of the carpenter or the chariot-maker was as high as that of the air-pilot in modern times, and for the identical reason: the victory in war depended upon skill in making chariots and in using them. The Aryans themselves were plying these crafts, as the ancient Greeks did in the age of Homer. Later on, when slave-labour became common with the complete subjugation of the Dasyus, many of these professions were relegated to the Śūdras, and came to be looked down upon.

[19] *A.V.*, III.16.

Later Vedic literature refers to a number of crafts and professions showing greater specialization in the economic life. Principal among them are those of the fishermen, jewel-makers, washermen, rope-makers, barbers, bow-makers, wood-gatherers, boatmen, actors, etc. It is not clear as to which of these professions were being followed by the Aryans and which by the non-Aryans or Śūdras. Some of them may have been followed by both, which led eventually to these professions being regarded as low.

The professions of the priest and the warrior were held in the highest esteem. The priest could ensure divine aid and intercession and was indispensable even for the king. The warrior was the main instrument of the Aryan expansion and naturally was regarded highly.

Medicine was assiduously cultivated and strenuous efforts were made to cure the usual ailments. The antidote for diseases was partly herbal remedies and partly incantations. The *Atharva-Veda* refers to the treatment of fevers, jaundice, consumption, dysentery, convulsions, ulcers, eye diseases, abortion, delivery, worms, menstrual disorders, poisoned arrows, etc. Surgery also seems to have been practised as the *Ṛg-Veda* (I.116.15) refers to the Aśvins giving an iron leg (*jaṅghā āyasī*) to Viśpalā to replace the one lost by her in a battle.

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION—KINGSHIP

In a nomadic society, the State is not territorial, but shifting from place to place. The Vedic Indians had just left the nomadic stage and were settling down into an agricultural community. There are therefore several traces of the nomadic State preserved in the Vedic literature. Kings are, for instance, described as the rulers over tribes like the Kurus, the Pañcālas, the Yadus, and the Turvaśas. They are not described as rulers over particular regions; nor are the boundaries of their kingdoms defined anywhere. The territorial State, however, was fast coming into existence and later Vedic literature clearly refers to it.[20]

Monarchy was the normal form of the political organization; republics or oligarchies were rare. Vedic literature contains some speculations about the origin of kingship. We are told that when gods were being continuously defeated in war by the Asuras, they pondered over the situation and concluded that the cause of their defeats was their having no king or competent leader.[21] They then anointed Indra as their king and ultimately won the war. Indra was selected for the exalted position, because he was a very capable and powerful military leader. We are told that on another occasion

[20] *Taittirīya Saṁhitā*, II.3.3-4.
[21] *Arājanyatayā vai no jayanti rājānaṁ karavāmahai iti* (*Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*).

Varuṇa succeeded in establishing his claim to kingship by proving that he was superior to all other gods in strength and leadership.

These parables would show that kingship was evolved in Vedic society as a result of the stress of war. Competent leadership was necessary to lead the Aryans successfully against the Dasyus or the non-Aryans, and this circumstance gave rise to kingship. But it should not be forgotten that the patriarchal organization of society had already sown the seeds of kingship. The patriarch or *kulapati* exercised wide powers over the members of his family. The Aryans were thus accustomed to obey a leader. Several *kulas* or families constituted a *viś*, presided over by a *viśpati*, and several *viśas* formed a *jana*, presided over by a *janapati*. Like the *kulapatis*, the *viśpatis* and *janapatis* also exercised considerable powers over the people under their leadership. The gradation of the *kula*, the *viś*, and the *jana* was to some extent similar to the gradation of the gens, the curiae, and the tribes among the ancient Romans.

WAS KINGSHIP ELECTIVE?

Kulapati was of course the patriarch of the family, its most senior member. How exactly a person rose to the status of a *viśpati* or a *janapati* in early times we do not know. *Viśpati* must have been one of the *kulapatis* of the *kulas* constituting the particular *viś*; and it is very likely that owing to the patriarchal instinct of the society, the honour may have been usually bestowed upon the most senior *kulapati*. The same phenomenon may have repeated in the case of the *janapatis*. Often, however, there were contending factions among the *kulapatis* and *viśpatis*, and Vedic literature preserves several traces of election of kings on such occasions. The *Ṛg-Veda* in one place expressly describes the *viśas* as electing their kings.[22] In the *Atharva-Veda*, the hope is expressed that a king to be crowned may be elected by the people (*viś*).[23] This election, perhaps, was more formal than real, and the electors were most probably the members of the contending factions of the *viśpatis*, rather than the people in general. Another passage in the *Atharva-Veda* (III.3.6) contains an assurance given to a king by his partisans, 'Let your enemies challenge you, we have elected you'. The references to the election of the king are relatively few; in one place the people coming out to elect their king are described as being afraid of him.[24] In a vast number of cases, kingship had become hereditary in the Vedic period. There is, for instance, reference to kingship being hereditary among the Pūrus for four generations and among the Sṛñjayas for ten generations.[25]

[22] *Tā īṁ viśo na rājānaṁ vṛṇānā bībhatsuvo apa vṛtrādatiṣṭhan* (X.124.8).
[23] *Tvāṁ viśo vṛṇatāṁ rājyāya* (III.4.2).
[24] See f.n. 22 above.
[25] See *Vedic Index*, I. p. 327; II. p. 470.

SIZE OF KINGDOMS

The territory over which a Vedic king ruled was small, probably not much larger than an average city-State of ancient Greece. In the later Vedic period, however, the States began to be more and more extensive. The conception of an emperor ruling over the territory 'from the Himalayas to the seas' is to be found in the Brāhmaṇa literature. There are references to kings like Bharata having performed the *rājasūya* or the *aśvamedha* sacrifice and assumed the status of the emperor or *saṁrāṭ*.

Differences in grade and status of kings are clearly hinted at in the later Vedic literature, which refers to the titles of *rājā*, *mahārājā*, *svarāṭ*, *bhoja*, and *saṁrāṭ*.[26] It is, however, not possible to visualize clearly the differences in status and power of these different potentates.

KING'S POWER

In the early period, when kingship was elective, the power of the king was naturally not extensive. Like the Homeric monarch, the Vedic king in the beginning was only the first among his peers, who had assented to his elevation to kingship.[27] Taxes also were not regularly paid; he had to remain content with voluntary offerings. One Vedic poet is seen praying to Indra that through his favour his patron king may have the good fortune to receive regular taxes from his subjects.[28]

Gradually, the prestige and power of the king began to increase. He probably owned extensive lands and herds of cattle, and there was considerable pomp associated with his court. The king was, of course, the leader of a strong military force, and the later Vedic literature describes how he held undisputed sway over his subjects. It is, however, interesting to note that like the Egyptian king, the Vedic monarch performed no public religious rituals; they were under the charge of his *purohita* or royal chaplain. It was held that the *purohita* was indispensable for the success of the king and the prosperity of his kingdom.[29]

POWERS OF SAMITI OR PARLIAMENT

In the later Vedic period the king's power was considerably controlled by an assembly or parliament known as *samiti*. *Vidatha*, *sabhā*, and *samiti* are the three assemblies we come across in the Vedic literature. The precise meaning of these terms cannot be determined with certainty; but most probably *vidatha* was an assembly of scholars and *sabhā* of the villagers, while the *samiti* represented the parliament of the kingdom. How it was

[26] *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, VII.3.14.
[27] *Yasmai vai rājāno rājyam anumanyante sa rājā bhavati, na sa yasmai na* (*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, IX.3.4.5).
[28] *Ṛ.V.*, X.173.6.
[29] Cf. *Vedic Index*, II. pp. 5-6.

constituted or elected, we do not know; what were its precise powers and how they were exercised is not clearly revealed by the sacred texts. In the coronation ritual, however, the hope is fervently expressed that the *samiti* of the king, who is being anointed, should be in agreement with him,[30] and the greatest curse which an infuriated Brāhmaṇa could think of against the oppressive king was that his *samiti* should be in disagreement with him.[31] It is thus clear that the *samiti* controlled the king to a great extent.

Maintenance of internal peace and defence against external aggression were among the most prominent duties of the king; his military leadership fully qualified him for their discharge. The epithet *dhṛtavrata* is often applied to the king; it suggests that he was the upholder of the established order and moral rules. In that capacity he must have served as the highest judge of the State, though the cases were, in the first instance, tried by the popular village courts.

KING'S DIVINITY

The doctrine of the divinity of the king or of his office is not found developed in the Vedic age. Only in a solitary passage King Purukutsa is called *ardha-deva* or semi-divine;[32] but that was because he was believed to be the gift of Indra and Varuṇa to his widowed mother. Another passage in the *Atharva-Veda* (XX.127.7) describes King Parīkṣit as a god among men, but that was the opinion of his grateful protégé. Though kings are mentioned scores of times in the Vedic literature, nowhere else is divinity ascribed to them. In the period of the later Saṁhitās, we find a gradually growing tendency to elevate the king to divinity. The coronation of the king was declared to be undertaken at the behest of god Savitṛ, and he was believed to be invested with the glory of Indra by his sacred anointment. Attempts were made to explain the phenomenon of one man being obeyed by many on the theory that the king was the visible emblem of Prajāpati, the chief god.[33] The way was thus paved to the general recognition of the king's divinity in the Smṛti period.

RATNINS OR KING'S COUNCILLORS

In the task of administration, the king was assisted by a council, whose members are called *ratnins* in the later Vedic literature. Among the *ratnins* were *purohita* or the priest, *senānī* or the commander-in-chief, *sūta* or the

[30] *Dhruvāya te samitiḥ kalpatāmiha* (*A.V.*, VI.88.3).
[31] *Ibid.*, V.19.15.
[32] *R.V.*, IV.42.9.
[33] *Eṣa vai prajāpateḥ pratyakṣatamaṁ yad-rājanyaḥ; tasmāt ekaḥ san bahūnām īṣṭe* (*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, V.1.5.14).

charioteer, *saṅgrahītṛ* or the treasurer, *bhāgadhuk* or the tax-collector, and *grāmaṇī* or the leader of the village. These were the heads of the different departments. *Mahiṣī* or the crowned queen, *kṣattṛ* or the chamberlain, and *akṣāvāpa* or the game companion also figure among the *ratnins*; they were the members of the royal court and entourage. The council of the *ratnins* was a forerunner of the council of ministers of the later period.

States being small, no provincial or district government had been developed. Writing being not much in use, the secretariat had not come into existence. The village was under the charge of the *grāmaṇī* or the village headman, who was assisted by the *sabhā* or the village *pañcāyat*. All problems of village administration like village defence and settlement of disputes were tackled by the *grāmaṇī* and his *sabhā*.

REPUBLICS

Republics were not unknown to the Vedic age, though they were rare. We have seen above how in early times kingship depended upon the willing concurrence of *viśpatis* and *kulapatis* to accept a particular person's leadership. One passage expressly declares that he alone can become a king, whose kingship is assented to by other kings.[34] Obviously this refers to an oligarchic body choosing its own leader. When this choice began to fall upon a particular family and its descendants, hereditary kingship was the result. When such was not the case, the State would be an oligarchical one or a republic. The *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* narrates how beyond the Himalayas there were *vi-rāṭ* or kingless States, where coronation was offered not to an individual, but to the whole population. Uttarakurus and Uttaramadras had this kingless or republican constitution in the later Vedic period. How this constitution worked, we do not know. It is interesting to note that this republican tradition continued in the Punjab in later times; for it contained several powerful republics at the time of the invasion of Alexander the Great.

This brief survey shows that considerable progress had been made by the Vedic age in social and political organization and in the cultivation of different arts and professions. Paucity of materials does not allow a more detailed picture to be drawn.

[34] See f.n. 27 above.

14

VEDIC RITUALS

I

RITUAL (Latin *ritus*, 'a custom') is 'worship reduced to a routine or habit'. It so systematizes religious worship, that religion becomes an abiding feature of the social life of the people—almost, a social institution. Ritual and prayer are the two expressions in act and word of man's sense of dependence on divine or supernatural powers and represent the practical aspect of religion, as distinguished from the theoretical one consisting of the body of beliefs held by men regarding these powers.

Man's unceasing effort to win happiness and to keep off trouble takes the two forms of religion and magic, which are not always kept apart even in the higher religions. The aim of the religious side of the Vedic ritual is to enlist the goodwill of divine powers by prayer and sacrifice, so that they may fulfil the wish of the worshipper. The approach here is a reverential and propitiatory one. The magical side of the Vedic ritual is coercive ; its aim is to mould the course of events on the basis of an assumed causal connection between the means (magic) employed and the effect to be produced. These two aspects of the Vedic ritual, which are inextricably mixed up, will be treated together in this article.

VEDIC RITUAL LITERATURE

For Vedic ritual in both these aspects, our literary sources, in the order (roughly speaking) of relative chronology and importance, are: (i) the *Ṛg-Veda Saṁhitā* ; (ii) the *Atharva-Veda Saṁhitā* ; (iii) the liturgical Saṁhitās of the *Sāma-Veda* and *Yajur-Veda* ; (iv) the Brāhmaṇas ; and (v) the Kalpa-Sūtras—Śrauta and Gṛhya.

THE ṚG-VEDA SAṀHITĀ

The compilation of the *Ṛg-Veda Saṁhitā* is not governed by the rigid principle of conformity to the order of the sacrificial ritual, and, though the cults of the Fire and the Soma dominate the religion of the *Ṛg-Veda* even in its early stages, an exclusively ritual character is not to be ascribed to it. While a great number of its hymns were from the first intended to be nothing but sacrificial chants and litanies, and a certain number is

connected with magic, a large number of hymns arose independently of the sacrificial ritual, though they were actually used later in sacrificial contexts.

Certain verses and hymns in the *Ṛg-Veda* were definitely intended for liturgical employment from the beginning: V.82. 1-3 and 4-6 are clearly two *tṛcas* (triads of verses) with which the *Vaiśvadeva Śastra* opens. Hymns I.2, 3, and 23 represent *collectanea* of verses used at the *Prauga Śastra* of the *agniṣṭoma* sacrifice (exactly as in later times). Certain groups of verses in III.28 and 52 can be identified as groups of *anuvākyā* (invitatory) verses to be recited over the offering of cakes at each of the three pressings of the *soma* sacrifice. X.179 has genuine *anuvākyā* verses for the offering of the pot of curd. I.93 has sets of *anuvākyā* and *yājyā* (offering) verses to be recited over the offering of the goat to Agni and Soma, a vital feature of the *agniṣṭoma*. According to Hillebrandt[1] even the *paridhānīyās* (the concluding verses of the litanies) may be traced in the *Ṛg-Veda*.

The hymn (X.85) which celebrates the marriage of Sūryā, the Sun-maiden, with Soma, is a prototype of human marriage, and the wedding stanzas of this hymn are employed at the marriage ceremony. The ritual of the dead seems to be the genuine original context of the hymns X.14-18. X.183 is a dialogue-hymn to be used liturgically to ensure the fruitfulness of matrimony. X.145 (described as an Upaniṣad by the *Sarvānukramaṇī*) and X.159 are spells aiming at the discomfiture of co-wives. Hymn X.162 is evidently directed against evil spirits, which threaten expectant mothers; while V.78. 5-9 looks like a liturgy of child-birth, to be employed for the prevention of miscarriage.

X.166 is a hymn with 'the destruction of rivals' as its subject or deity. X.165 is an expiatory hymn to be recited when a pigeon or dove (*kapota*) dashes against the house or flies into it. The appendix-like portion (I.50.11-13) of the hymn to Sūrya stamps the whole hymn as a 'healing charm', a spell against jaundice and heart-disease. X.161 and 163 are quite plainly spells for the cure of consumption (*yakṣman* or *rāja-yakṣman*).

VII.54 is a hymn to Vāstoṣpati (the Lord of the Homestead), suggestive of the ritual context of appeasing the *vāstu*. Hymn IV.57, addressed to the 'Lord of the Field', to the plough, to the ploughed furrows, to the oxen with their traces, and to the goad, is designed for employment at rites signalizing agricultural operations. Hymns VI.28 and X.169 refer to the tending of cattle, their going out to graze in the pasture-lands, their return to the cow-pen in the evening, their overflowing with milk, etc.

[1] *Göttingische Gelehrte Anzeigen* (1889), p. 421.

THE ATHARVA-VEDA SAṀHITĀ

The *Atharva-Veda Saṁhitā* too cannot be called liturgical in its aim. Although its songs and spells have served ritual and magic ends nearly all along, they were collected for their own sake from different points of view, such as a consideration of their authors, their contents, and their external form, etc. The *Atharva-Veda* is the chief source of our knowledge of popular magic, although magic elements were never absent from the sacrifices in the other Vedas.

The oldest designation of this Veda is '*Atharvāṅgirasaḥ*', derived apparently from names of two *ṛṣis* or 'fire-priests'. '*Atharvan*' denotes 'holy magic' in the form of spells for healing diseases and for blessing, and '*Aṅgiras*' is associated with 'hostile or black magic' for cursing enemies and exorcising demoniacal beings, especially *piśācas* and *rākṣasas*, supposed to be responsible for the various ills of mankind. To the first category belong: hymns to ensure long life; benedictions to secure safety and prosperity of cattle and sheep, and success in agricultural operations, commerce, and dice-play; love- and marriage-spells; magic songs for victory in battle etc.; and, finally, incantations in which the mystical meaning of *dakṣiṇā* is expounded.

Expiatory formulas (*prāyaścitta*) for expurgating all varieties of sin and guilt belong to the category of the formulas for healing. 'Sin' is not merely a breach of the moral or religious code, but also of the social and legal codes, and, further, comprises all errors (conscious or unconscious) of commission and omission in the performance of sacrifices and ceremonies. The *Mṛgāra* hymns (IV.23-29), praying for deliverance from *aṁhas* ('affliction or distress' including the idea of 'guilt or sin'), rank also as *prāyaścitta* hymns. As everything evil and every misfortune is attributed to the agency of evil spirits, 'reconciliation spells' or those for the restoration of harmony in the family (III.30), for the appeasement of a wrathful master, for influence in the assembly or a court of law, bear the character of expiatory as well as benedictory formulas.

To the *Aṅgiras* category belong various incantations, exorcisms, and curses dealing with love-intrigues and conjugal dissentions; magic songs with the aim of winning the love of a person against his or her will (III.25; VI.130) and the songs (VI.138; VII.35, 90) aiming at inducing sterility in men and women. To this class belongs also the exorcism (XVI) against the 'nightmare demon' who is commanded to haunt the enemies! Agni, the demon-destroyer, is often invoked for aid in these contexts. The second half of a beautiful hymn to Varuṇa (IV.16) becomes the prologue to an exorcism against the liar and the cursing rogue, and evil magic is sought to be averted and turned back on the author himself (V.14; VI. 37).

In the latter part of the *Atharva-Veda Saṁhitā* are found songs and spells for sacrificial purposes, which apparently seek to bring it in a line with the other three Vedas and to secure for it an official place in the sacred literature as such. Thus we have marriage-hymns (XIV), corresponding to the marriage-hymn of the *Ṛg-Veda* (X.85); two *Āprī* hymns, modelled on those of the *Ṛg-Veda*; hymns and verses connected with the ritual of the dead, on the lines of the funeral-hymns of the *Ṛg-Veda* (X); hymns dealing with the *soma* sacrifice, addressed to Indra (XX), nearly all borrowed from the *Ṛg-Veda*; and prose-formulae (XVI), celebrating the Waters and dealing with the purification-ritual, corresponding to those of the *Yajur-Veda*. The strange *Kuntāpa* hymns (XX.127-36), which serve as liturgies in the sacrificial ritual, and are partly reminiscent of the *dāna-stutis* (eulogies on charity) of the *Ṛg-Veda*, are original productions of the *Atharva-Veda*.

The mystery-mongering and apparent philosophizing of a few hymns of the *Atharva-Veda* with theosophic and cosmogonic contents often serves practical ritual aims. The glorification of the great mystery of the cow (X.10) is but a veiled boost for one who gives a cow as *dakṣiṇā*; in XI.5, the Vedic student is praised; and in XV the glorification of the Absolute (in its divine and earthly aspects as Rudra and Vrātya respectively) is meant to commend the conversion of the Vrātyas to Brāhmaṇism through prescribed sacrificial ceremonies.

THE SĀMA-VEDA AND THE YAJUR-VEDA SAṀHITĀS

These may well be called 'liturgical or ritual Saṁhitās' because the songs, the *mantras*, and the metrical and prose formulae are arranged here in the order of their employment at the sacrifice and because each of them is assigned to a special category of priests, the *Sāma-Veda* being the song-book of the *udgātṛ* and the *Yajur-Veda* the prayer-book of the *adhvaryu*. The institution of the sacrifice had left behind, even in the *Ṛg-Veda*, the early simple stage when there was *one* fire—that of the domestic hearth—, when the householder himself acted as the *hotṛ* or the sacrificial priest, having the option of co-opting as assistant, the *brahman*, if necessary, and when the offerings were chiefly made into the fire. The elaboration of the sacrifice was by this time in that full-blown stage when, in addition to the domestic sacrifices or *pāka-yajñas* and sacramental ceremonies performed by every householder—rich or poor—, the grand Śrauta sacrifices, periodical and regular as well as occasional and special, such as the *rājasūya* and the *aśvamedha*, with their *three* fires, more than one altar, and their multitude of priests, classified into four principal categories, were celebrated by the wealthy, the nobles, and especially the kings. Melted butter, milk, grains, meal-pap, and cakes as well as the flesh of the goat, the sheep, the bull, and

the cow were the common offerings in the *havir-yajña* category of sacrifices which includes the animal sacrifice, performed as an independent sacrifice. The animal sacrifice, however, usually formed part of the *soma* sacrifices, when, above all, the libations of the *soma*-juice constituted the principal offerings. The Soma cult, which was fairly well developed even in the Ṛg-Vedic age, centred chiefly round Indra, the warrior-god. The rich *yajamāna* now did very little himself, his chief duty being the liberal payment of *dakṣiṇā* to the officiating priests.

The duties of the four classes of priests and, *pari passu*, the respective rôles assigned *de novo* to the four Saṁhitās in the sacrifice are now clearly demarcated: The *hotṛ* (the invoking priest) recites appropriate verses from the *Ṛg-Veda* to invite and glorify the gods, i.e. the *anuvākyās* and the *yājyās*. He has also to compile out of the *Ṛg-Veda Saṁhitā*, the *śastras* (songs of praises) and recite them at the *soma* sacrifices. Before a *śastra* could be recited, however, the chants (*stotras*) consisting of Ṛg-Vedic stanzas (*ṛcas*) with certain melodies (*sāmans*) had to be sung by the *udgātṛ* to accompany the preparation and proffering of the *soma*.

For the use of the *udgātṛ*, who has to be well versed in the various permutations and combinations of the *sāmans*, is earmarked the *Sāma-Veda Saṁhitā*, which is a compilation of texts all drawn from the *Ṛg-Veda*, but set to music (*sāman*). As these had to be chanted at the *soma* sacrifices, they are chiefly addressed to Indra (the *soma*-drinker), to Soma, and in a minor way to Agni.

The Saṁhitās of the *Yajur-Veda* contain liturgical stanzas and formulas and are preserved in two main *śākhās* (branches) called Kṛṣṇa (Black) and Śukla (White). Four closely interrelated recensions of the *Black Yajur-Veda* (the *Kāṭhaka*, *Kapiṣṭhala-kaṭha*, *Maitrāyaṇī*, and *Taittirīya Saṁhitās*) have come down to us. The characteristic feature of the *Black Yajur-Veda* is that, along with the *mantras* to be muttered by the *adhvaryus*, it contains prescriptions for the sacrificial ritual, in which these *mantras* are rubricated as well as theological discussions or *brāhmaṇas*, which form the subject matter of the later Brāhmaṇa works. The *White Yajur-Veda*, in its two almost identical recensions—the *Mādhyandina* and *Kāṇva*—contains only the *mantras*, the *brāhmaṇa* portion being collected separately in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*. Although the order of the *mantras* in the various Saṁhitās of these two *śākhās* differs, the ritual ceremonies in which they are rubricated are the same. An enumeration of the various topics that form the contents of the Saṁhitā of the *White Yajur-Veda*, the *Vājasaneyi*, containing 40 *adhyāyas* (chapters) in both recensions, will be useful as presenting an outline of the entire Śrauta ritual.

Adhyāyas I to II.28: *Darśa-pūrṇamāsa* (new and full moon sacrifices).

II.29-34: *Piṇḍa-pitṛyajña* (sacrifice to the manes). III.1-8: *Agnyādhāna* and *punarādheya*-(establishment and re-establishment of the fires). III.9-10: *Agnihotra* (fire-sacrifice) offered morning and evening. III.11-43: *Agnyupasthāna* (homage to the fires, usually performed at the evening fire-service only). III.44-63: *Cāturmāsyāni* (four-month or seasonal sacrifices to be offered once every four months, at the beginning of each of the three seasons: spring, rains, and autumn). IV.1 to VIII.23: *Soma* sacrifice in general, which, including the animal sacrifice as a part of it, has many varieties, the *agniṣṭoma* being the most typical of them. Different varieties of *agniṣṭomas* are described in this section. IX.1-34: *Vājapeya* (draught of strength). IX.35-40 and X: *Rājasūya* (sacrificial ceremony of the king's consecration and inauguration). XI to XVIII: *Agnicayana* (piling or the construction of the fire-altar). It lasted for more than one year, the altar being laid in five layers, with 10,800 bricks and shaped like a bird with outspread wings. XIX-XXI: *Sautrāmaṇī* (primarily designed, in all probability, as an expiation for over-indulgence in the drinking of the *soma*). It prescribes the use of *surā* instead of the *soma*, as an offering, along with a bull, a sheep, and a goat, dedicated to Indra, Sarasvatī, and the Aśvins respectively. XXII-XXV: *Aśvamedha* (horse-sacrifice). The steed is identified with Dadhikrāvan, who represents the sun. The twenty-third chapter (corresponding to *Taittirīya Saṁhitā*, VII.8) introduces riddle-games, intended not merely for the amusement of the priests, but also for the entertainment of the gods. These are not merely theological or *brahmodya* (pertaining to *brahman* or sacred knowledge) riddles, but popular ones, a few of which look like juvenile riddles.

Adhyāyas XXVI to XL are later additions, XXVI to XXXV being designated by tradition as *khilāni* (supplements or appendices). XXVI-XXIX: They give only such sacrificial formulae as are supplementary to those given in the earlier chapters. XXX to XXXI: *Puruṣamedha* (human-sacrifice). Chapter XXX gives a list of nearly 184 victims to be offered to the most diverse divinities, concrete and abstract! *Puruṣamedha* was, probably, only a symbolical or theoretical rite, improvised just as a part of the sacrificial mysticism, but never actually performed. The rite of an actual slaying is not described in the Brāhmaṇas at all. The offering as such is mentioned in late Sūtra works, which probably invented it to make good what was felt by them to be an anomaly, namely, the omission of man from the list of sacrificial victims. Chapter XXXI which gives, under the title '*upaniṣad*' (secret doctrine), a version of the *Puruṣa-sūkta* (*Ṛ.V.*, X.90) to be recited at the *puruṣamedha*, confirms this view. XXXII to XXXIII.54: Here are *mantras* employed at the *sarvamedha* (the all-sacrifice), so called because at its conclusion the sacrificer gives away all his possessions as

dakṣiṇā and retires to the forest as a hermit. XXXII is an Upaniṣad in form and contents. XXXIII.55 to XXXIV: Although the first six verses of XXXIV are also counted as Upaniṣadic, this section is assigned by Mahīdhara to the *brahma-yajña*. XXXV: Gives verses for the *pitṛmedha* (sacrifice to the manes). XXXVI to XXXIX: Are devoted to the *pravargya* ('hot-milk' sacrifice), a ceremony for the lustration of the sacrificer, because it provides him with a heavenly body, which alone entitles him to a place among the gods. A *mahāvīra* pot is heated, milk is poured into it and boiled and then offered to the Aśvins. From a mystical point of view, the pot represents the sun and the milk the divine stream of life and light which pours itself on to the sacrificer. At the close, the sacrificial utensils are so arranged as to resemble a human figure, the milk-pot standing for the head, the sacred grass for the hair, etc. The last chapter (XL) is an Upaniṣad, the *Īśa*, which, finding probably that the way of knowledge was gaining ground, promulgates the compromise solution of 'desireless discharge of duty' between excessive ritualism on the one hand and total abstinence from action on the other.

THE BRĀHMAṆAS

'*Brāhmaṇa*' may literally mean a text (i) embodying *bráhman* (neut.) (sacred speech, knowledge, or prayer); or (ii) emanating from a *brahmán* (masc.) (priest); or (iii) connected with a Brāhmaṇa (a member of the priestly order). In a general way therefore the Brāhmaṇas mean the *collectanea* of all the comments and discussions of experts on the sacred subject of sacrifice which is the focal point to which all their expositions and digressions in the shape of cosmogonic myths, ancient legends, and narratives converge. The Brāhmaṇas treat of the ritual from the point of view of the priestly class specializing in the Veda to which they belong. Thus the Brāhmaṇas of the *Ṛg-Veda* specify the duties of the *hotṛ* priest and select such *mantras* from the *Ṛg-Veda Saṁhitā* as are suited to the particular rite under description as its *śastra*, without regard to their original sequence. But the Brāhmaṇas of the *Sāma-* and *Yajur-Vedas*, specifying as they do the duties of the *udgātṛ* and the *adhvaryu*, respectively, have not to modify the original order of the *mantras* they cite from their respective Saṁhitās, as these are already adapted to the order of the ritual. The Brāhmaṇas of the *Sāma-Veda*, the Veda of music, have naturally very little to do with the interpretation of the *mantras* cited from their Veda in the ritual, musical adaptation and notation being their chief concern. The Brāhmaṇas of the *Black Yajur-Veda* (e.g. the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa*) are so similar in contents to their Saṁhitās, with their mixture of Mantra and Brāhmaṇa matter, that they look almost like supplements to them. The *Śata-*

patha Brāhmaṇa of the *White Yajur-Veda* being devoid of Mantra matter is a true representative of Brāhmaṇa literature, being a running, dogmatic, and discursive commentary on its Saṁhitā, verse by verse, in the original order.

The contents of the Brāhmaṇas are technically classified into two chief categories: *vidhi* (rule, injunction, or precept) and *arthavāda* (exposition of meaning). The rules (*vidhi*) for the performance of the ritual acts are supplemented by an exposition (*arthavāda*) of the aim and propriety of the ritual acts and of the liturgical context and meaning of the rubricated *mantras.* In this *arthavāda,* everything connected with the sacrifice—the prayers, formulas, chants, and melodies, their words and metres, and every sacrificial act and material—is invested with an equal importance and discussed from different points of view often on the basis of some *itihāsa* (history), *ākhyāna* (story), or *purāṇa* (creation-legend).

THE BRĀHMAṆAS OF THE ṚG-VEDA AND SĀMA-VEDA

As to the ritual contents of the Brāhmaṇas, the *Śāṅkhāyana* or *Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa* treats, in its 30 chapters, of the entire sacrificial ritual in a systematic manner while the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa,* in its 40 chapters, is occupied principally with the *soma* sacrifices.

The *Tāṇḍya Mahā-brāhmaṇa* or *Pañcaviṁśa* ('twenty-five' books) *Brāhmaṇa* is a storehouse of legends, and adequately represents the ritual of the *udgātṛ.* All varieties of the *soma* sacrifice, the *ekāha, ahīna,* and *sattra* are described in it. (1) The *ekāha* has only one *sutyā* day on which the *soma*-juice is extracted and the libations made. This type of *soma* sacrifices, in which the principal ceremony is completed in a single day, is designated *ekāha,* leaving out of consideration the four preparatory days which are required for every *soma* sacrifice. (2) The *ahīna* has from two to twelve *sutyā* days. (3) The *sattra* type lasts for more than twelve days, and sometimes for a whole year and even longer. There are seven fundamental forms (*saṁsthās*) of the *sutyā* festival of the *soma* sacrifice, occasioned by the varying number of *śastras* and *stotras* recited and sung. They are: *agniṣṭoma, atyagniṣṭoma, ukthya, ṣoḍaśin, vājapeya, atirātra,* and *aptoryāma.* They bear the generic title '*jyotiṣṭoma*'. In the description of all these types of *soma* sacrifice, this Brāhmaṇa records the chants of the *Sāma-Veda Saṁhitā* with all the modifications and variations of order etc. suitable to each type. It further gives detailed directions for the sacrifices on the Sarasvatī and the Dṛṣadvatī and for the *vrātya-stomas,* which admitted to the full membership of the Brāhmaṇical society such Vrātyas as lived outside it, because they either had lost their position as 'twice-born' or never attained to it.

The *Ṣaḍviṁśa* ('Twenty-sixth') *Brāhmaṇa*, as its name implies, is a supplement to the *Pañcaviṁśa Brāhmaṇa*, and deals with rites of expiation and imprecation. Its last chapter ranks as a separate Brāhmaṇa, the '*Adbhuta*', dealing with miracles and omens. The *Chāndogya* or *Mantra Brāhmaṇa*, gives *mantras* for the domestic rituals, such as birth and marriage rites, in its first two chapters, the last eight constituting the famous *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*. Among the remaining four Brāhmaṇas of the *Sāma-Veda*, only the *Sāmavidhāna Brāhmaṇa* deals with rituals, especially employment of chants to gain all kinds of ends.

THE BRĀHMAṆAS OF THE YAJUR-VEDA AND ATHARVA-VEDA

The *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* is but a continuation of the *Taittirīya Saṁhitā*, and treats of the sacrifice to the *nakṣatras*, the horse-sacrifice, the *sautrāmaṇī*, and the *puruṣamedha*.

The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (of a 'hundred paths' or chapters) is an extensive Brāhmaṇa, available in both the *Mādhyandina* and *Kāṇva* recensions. The first nine *kāṇḍas* (in the former recension) constitute a close and continuous commentary, quoting, explaining, and liturgically employing the *mantras* of the first 18 chapters of the *Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā*. The next four *kāṇḍas* deal with the *agni-rahasya* (mystery of the fire-altar), *upanayana* (initiation), *svādhyāya* (Vedic study), *prāyaścittas* (expiations), Saṁhitā formulas of the *sautrāmaṇī* rite, *aśvamedha*, *puruṣamedha*, *sarvamedha*, and the sacrifice to the manes and death-ceremonies, including the raising of a burial-mound to the dead. The first three chapters of the last (the 14th) *kāṇḍa* comment on the *pravargya* ceremony in the Saṁhitā, while the last six chapters constitute the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*.

The *Gopatha Brāhmaṇa* is attached to the *Atharva-Veda*, having no special relation to it. It is a medley of extracts from the *Aitareya* and *Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇas* and, to a certain extent, from the *Maitrāyaṇī* and *Taittirīya Saṁhitās*, with a few passages from the *Śatapatha* and *Pañcaviṁśa* thrown in.

THE ĀRAṆYAKAS AND THE UPANIṢADS

The excessive ritualism and sacerdotal theologizing of the Brāhmaṇas evoked an inevitable natural reaction, the faint rumblings of which can be detected as early as the *Ṛg-Veda*, when sceptics questioned the merit of sacrificing and even doubted the existence of Indra and the plurality of the gods. But the Brāhmaṇical genius for compromise accommodated these free-thinkers by promulgating the system of the four *āśramas*[3] (stages or

[3] During the first two stages of *brahmacarya* and *gārhasthya*, the Saṁhitās and the Brāhmaṇas are cultivated; and during the last two stages of *vānaprasthya* and *sannyāsa*, the Āraṇyakas and the Upaniṣads are resorted to.

orders of a planned religious life), whereby ritualistic activity is progressively eliminated during the last two stages.

The Āraṇyakas (forest-texts), the appendix-like portions of the Brāhmaṇas, which deal with the mysticism and symbolism of the sacrifice and priestly philosophy in general and prescribe meditations (*upāsanās*) rather than sacrificial ritual, are ideal text-books for the forest-hermit. Purely ritualistic passages therefore are to be found in them only casually.

The Upaniṣads which principally favour the esoteric way of knowledge or pure philosophy, pursued in an atmosphere of secrecy and seclusion, in virtual opposition to the exoteric way of works or ritual are eminently suitable as text-books for the fourth *āśrama*, that of the ascetics and monks, and will have to be passed over in this review of Vedic ritual.

THE SŪTRAS

The entire literature reviewed so far came to be looked upon as Śruti or 'divine revelation', and for its preservation and utilization, it was felt necessary to formulate a systematic curriculum, consisting of the six Vedāṅgas, viz. *śikṣā* (pronunciation) and *chandas* (metre), for the reading and recitation of it ; *nirukta* (etymology) and *vyākaraṇa* (grammar), for the understanding thereof ; and *jyotiṣa* (astronomy) and *kalpa* (ritual), for the employment of it at the sacrifices. Special manuals on these subjects were composed as text-books for the priests and specialists in a most extraordinary prose style ideally adapted for memorization—the *sūtra* style. The Sūtra works on *kalpa*, with which alone we are concerned here, were necessitated by the pleonastic, diffuse, and digressive treatment of sacrificial topics in the Brāhmaṇas, and fall into two or three mutually complementary classes: (1) The Śrauta-Sūtras are so called because they are based on the Śruti or deal with sacrifices described in it. (2) The Smārta-Sūtras derive their authority from Smṛti ('memory' or 'immemorial tradition'), and are divided into two categories: (a) The Gṛhya-Sūtras, dealing with household ceremonies performed with the domestic fire by the married householder *himself*, in the company of his wife, in the interests of his family. They treat of the five daily sacrifices (*pañca-mahāyajña*), and of sacrifices connected with certain recurring days, months, or seasons of the year (like the new and full moon sacrifices), and describe domestic sacraments (*saṁskāras*) that solemnize all the important stages of life beginning with conception and ending with death. (b) The Dharma-Sūtras (also called 'Sāmayācārika' Sūtras), deal with '*dharma*' in the sense of 'duty or law' as well as 'custom or conduct', and emphasize the religious, rather than the secular, aspect of customary law. (3) The Śulva-Sūtras (*śulva*: 'measuring string') contain rules for the erection and measurement of the sacrificial place and the fire-altars.

II

I. THE ŚRAUTA CEREMONIES OF THE VEDIC RITUAL

The Vedic sacrifice is part of an exchange, a nourishing gift profferd to the god by the worshipper with a motive followed by a reward, a perfectly voluntary act of the gladdened deity. The attitude of the worshipper is not one of extreme humility or of deep emotion, but one of confident friendship, though full of reverence towards the maker of the universe.

As a rule, ritual accompanies prayer, with a few exceptions, such as the recitation of the prayers to Agni, Uṣas, and the Aśvins in the morning litany of the *soma* sacrifice and the muttering of the daily *sandhyā* or twilight devotions, morning and evening.

Agni, called the mouth of the gods, because he receives the sacrificial offerings, not only for himself but also for transmission to the gods, is the centre of the Vedic ritual. Earth, air, and water were also used as instruments of transmission in certain cases, when offerings intended for water-divinities were thrown into water, those intended for the Dead were deposited in small pits, and oblations to Rudra and the demons were scattered in the air, suspended on trees, interred underground, thrown on anthills, or disposed of in some secret manner. A dual practice is hinted at when we find that the oblations, before being consigned to the fire to be conducted to the gods in heaven, are placed for some time on a litter of sacred grass (*barhis*) which is spread on the *vedi* (an oblong shallow excavation somewhat narrowed in the middle). The *Ṛg-Veda* speaks in the same breath of the sacrifice conveyed by Agni to the gods in heaven and of the gods borne by Agni to the sacrifice on earth (VII.11.5).

The warming of the dishes and the preparation of the offerings for the sacrifice take place in the *gārhapatya* fire; the *āhavanīya*, installed in the east, receives the offerings intended for the gods, and the *dakṣiṇa* fire, that for the *pitṛs* and demons, being established in the south, the quarter associated with these beings.

The fire was either produced by the friction of the two *araṇīs* (a lower slab of soft wood and an upper drill of hard wood) or borrowed from the house of a wealthy owner of cows or a reputed sacrificer. A rejuvenation of the old *āhavanīya* fire, by adding to it a new fire, took place at the *soma* sacrifices and at the four-monthly seasonal sacrifices.

Into the fire were offered oblations (solid or liquid) consisting of the products of the cow, believed to have a sacred and mystical quality, namely, milk in all its forms and butter in various degrees of temperature. Barley and rice, cooked or baked, were made into cakes that were offered on pot-

sherds or tablets, the number of which depended on the character of the god in question. Libations of water mixed with sesame were peculiar to the *śrāddha* offerings to the *pitṛs*. In the animal sacrifice, the flesh of cattle, sheep, and (especially) the he-goat—the victims—was the common offering. Roughly speaking, two or three principles seem to have determined the choice of the material of the sacrifice: (i) The worshipper offered his own favourite food (including flesh) and drink to the deity. (ii) That which corresponded to the individuality of the god was offered to him, e.g. the milk of a black cow with a white calf was offered to the twin goddesses of night and morn. The correspondence extended to the sex, colour, and other qualities of the deity and the victim, a white goat offered to Sūrya being another example. (iii) The particular wishes, for the fulfilment of which the sacrifice was undertaken, determined the character and the material of the sacrifice. For example, in the *śyena* (a *soma*) sacrifice, if the life of an enemy is aimed at, the priests wear a *red frontlet* and the sacrificial butter is made from the milk of a *sick* cow. Further, in all *soma* sacrifices was offered the *soma*-juice, a drink more invigorating than inebriating. In a few cases, honey and *surā* (wine) were offered. The sacrifice of non-edible and non-potable objects (like iron-nails) was a feature of magic rites (to secure, say, deadly weapons) on the principle, that the means should be analogous in character to the end in view.

The Vedic period is marked by the absence of any public temple or house of god and of any public cult of worship as such. The nearest approach is the mention in two Śrauta-Sūtras of the fire of the *sabhā* (council-house) and *āvasatha* (house of reception for the councillors), and in the *Atharva-Veda*, of the *sabhya* (fire of the *sabhā*). This suggests that the fire was lighted in the *sabhā* for the cult of the clan or community on the solemn occasion of a meeting of the people in council; but this is merely an occasional use and in the *Ṛg-Veda* its only faint trace is in the epithet *viśpati* (lord of the clan) of Agni. Idols, though probably known, are not recognized in the Vedic cult, except in the latest stratum of Vedic literature such as the *Adbhuta Brāhmaṇa* and the *Pāraskara Gṛhya-Sūtra*, and there, too, in the domestic sphere and no public worship was associated with it. Vedic worship being thus essentially private, there were no public priests, all sacrifices being performed on behalf of an individual sacrificer.

THE PRIESTHOOD, MANTRAS, AND EARLY RITUALS IN THE ṚG-VEDA

The amplitude of technical terms connected with the sacrificial ritual that we find in the *Ṛg-Veda* reveals a fairly high stage of ritual development. II.1.2 mentions the priests *hotṛ*, *potṛ*, *neṣṭṛ*, *agnīdh*, *praśāstṛ*, *adhvaryu*, and *brahman* (comparable in a general way to the

Avestan list of eight priests) and II.43.1-2, *udgātṛ* and the *sāma-ga* (*sāman*-singer). The *hotṛ*, the *brahman*, the *adhvaryu*, and the *agnīdh* (who was a second *adhvaryu*, as it were, because of his duties such as kindling the fire, keeping it burning, etc.) sufficed for the new and full moon sacrifices and the lesser offerings. The *praśāstṛ* (elsewhere called *upavaktṛ*) served as an assistant to the *hotṛ* at the animal sacrifice, giving him the *praiṣas* (directions) to recite his verse.

The earliest stage of the ritual seems to be the one when the *hotṛ* 'poured' the offering and 'called' or invoked the gods—a double duty, that is suggested by the double derivation of the word '*hotṛ*' from *hu*, 'to pour', and *hve*, 'to call'. A division of the two functions, however, seems to have been arrived at even in the *Ṛg-Veda*, when the manual work was taken over by the *adhvaryu*, the *hotṛ* retaining his premier position as the 'invoker' or 'reciter of hymns'.

The recitations of the *hotṛ*, bearing the technical appellations of *uktha* and *śaṁsa*, were already distinguished from the songs of the *sāman*-singers, which were characterized by the frequent use of the *gāyatrī* and *pragātha* metres and by the formulation of *tṛcas* (triads of verses) for singing as strophes. The *Śakvarī* verses found only in the *Sāma-Veda*, as well as the *bṛhad* and *rathantara sāmans* (melodies) are definitely known, and some *sāmans* appear to have been sung upon the verses used by the *hotṛ* in the ritual.

Ṛg-Veda III.53.3 shows that the ritual formula whereby the *adhvaryu* is asked to give the word-signal to the *hotṛ* for the commencement of his recitation and the former's response are known.

As regards the fourth priest, the *brahman*, it is possible that, already in the latest parts of the *Ṛg-Veda* (X.141.3), a *brahman* priest, entrusted with the general supervision of the whole ritual, was known, as he is deified along with Soma, the king, and other deities. When the *brahman* is lauded (IV.50.7-9) as one whom the king must place in front of him, the way is paved for a gradual merger of the two functions, priestly and advisory (of the *brahman* and *purohita*), which gave the *brahman*, in the later ritual, his all-important position as a superintending priest.

The *purohita* in the *Ṛg-Veda* is known to have been employed by a king or a rich Kṣatriya or Vaiśya. The *purohita* (lit. 'placed in front') performed all the domestic ritual of the king's household. The reference to Agni as '*purohita*' as well as '*hotṛ*' (I.1.1 ; II.3.2 ; II.11.1 ; V.11.2) and the description of the two divine *hotṛs* of the *Āprī* litanies as the two *purohitas* (X.66.13 ; X.70.7) suggest that the *hotṛ* being the most important priest in the *Ṛg-Veda*, the *purohita* did naturally take over his duties, just as in the later ritual (e.g. in the Brāhmaṇas) the *purohita* assumes the office of the

brahman, the overseer of the sacrifice, an office that had to be separated from that of the *hotṛ*, because of the growing elaboration and complication of the ritual.

The priesthood, it appears, was normally hereditary in the Ṛg-Vedic period. Although the ritual cult of the different priestly families must have been marked originally by serious differences, these differences seem to have survived only in minor details, in the days of the family-*maṇḍalas* (groups or circles) of the *Ṛg-Veda*. The ceremony of 'choosing (and formally inviting) the priests' (*ṛtvig-varaṇa*) is known to the *Ṛg-Veda* (VIII.58.1ff.). The *śraddhā* (faith) which inspires the sacrificer to bestow a liberal largesse (*dakṣiṇā*) upon the priests at the end of a rite is glorified and elevated to the rank of a deity (X.151).

The *yājyā* and *puronuvākyā* verses, which the *hotṛ* has to repeat in the majority of offerings, are found in the *Ṛg-Veda*. The *puronuvākyā* is a verse addressed to a god inviting him to be present, and the *yājyā* is recited just when the *adhvaryu* is about to throw the offering into the fire.

There is only *one* altar referred to in the *Ṛg-Veda*. It is erected in the house of the sacrificer and the fire kindled by friction is deposited in *three separate places* (corresponding to the *three fires* of the later ritual). Only the *gārhapatya* fire is named, but according to Hillebrandt,[3] the *vaiśvānara* and the *narāśaṁsa* (or *kravya-vāhana*) are the fore-runners of the *āhavanīya* and *dakṣiṇa* fires, respectively. A bunch of sacred grass, gathered from the eastern region, is spread on the sacrificial grounds for the invited gods to sit on. Sacred fire-wood (*samidh*) is placed on the fire and oblations are offered into the fire to the accompaniment of the recitation of hymns, three times a day. Hymns III.27 and V.28 must have been liturgically employed from the beginning at the kindling of the fire. The oblations consist of milk, butter, grains, and cakes, or of the flesh of the goat, the bull, the cow, the sheep, or the horse. Honey was a ritual offering, but whether *surā* (wine), which is in bad odour in the *Ṛg-Veda*, was used in the offerings is not certain. The *sruc* (spoon) and the two *darvīs* (ladles) were used in pouring the offerings. *Grahas* (cups) were used for the offerings.

The process of heating the milk in a pot (later elaborated into a ceremony called *pravargya*) and even the minor ritual of offering a cake to Agni Sviṣṭakṛt at the end of a ceremony are known. The *Āprī* hymns, numbering ten, in the *Ṛg-Veda*, were undoubtedly designed from the beginning to provide *yājyā* verses for the fore-offerings of the animal sacrifice. *Ṛg-Veda* III.8 was meant for the anointing of the *yūpa* (sacrificial post)—an essential

[3] *Vedische Mythologie*, II. p. 98.

feature of the animal sacrifice. The most imposing animal sacrifice, that of a horse (*aśvamedha*), was a pompous ceremony even in the *Ṛg-Veda*, where there are hymns to solemnize its various stages, such as the hewing of the sacrificial post, the decoration of it, the procession of the steed bedecked with golden trappings with the slain goat in front, and the cooking of the horse-flesh and its distribution among the priests.

The most important sacrifice in the *Ṛg-Veda* ritual is, however, the *soma* sacrifice and the picture of it that we get from the *Ṛg-Veda* is, in essentials, similar to that in the later ritual, excepting for variations in terminology. There are three—the morning, midday, and evening—pressings (*savanas*) of the *soma*. The Ṛbhus have a special claim on the evening pressing, while the midday pressing is special to Indra and the Maruts. The three metres—*gāyatrī, triṣṭubh,* and *jagatī*—are assigned to the three *savanas*. The *soma*-juice is normally extracted by pounding the plant with the pressing stones (*adri*). *Soma* is mixed with water in the *kośa* (tub or vat), then poured into two *camūs* (bowls), where it is mixed with milk, and is finally transferred to the *kalaśa* (receptacle), when it is ready for use at the sacrifice. The *sautrāmaṇī* rite in which *soma* is offered seems to be known, though it is not named.

THE ŚRAUTA SACRIFICES

A convenient and very practical classification of Vedic sacrifices is the one into (1) periodic or regularly recurrent (*nitya*); and (2) occasional or special (*naimittika*).

The time for the setting up of the sacred fires (*agnyādhāna*) is either a particular season (according to the caste of the performer) or a *parvan* (new or full moon). It is a two-day ceremony. On the first day, two sheds are erected, one for the *gārhapatya* with a round altar, a spot to the south of it being marked out for the *dakṣiṇa* fire with a semi-circular altar, and the other shed for the *āhavanīya* with a square altar. The sacrificer and his wife keep awake for the whole night, listening to the music of lutes and flutes. The next morning, the fire is either produced or borrowed and placed on the *gārhapatya* altar, fuel is added, and it is addressed in the name of the ancestors of the sacrificer. When it blazes up, a brand is taken from it and transferred to the *āhavanīya* fire. The *dakṣiṇa* fire is lighted in the same way, before or after the *āhavanīya*. When the fires are found to bring no luck to the sacrificer, they are allowed to go out, and after a break of three days to one year, new fires are established feeding the fire with *kuśa* grass instead of wood. This is the *punarādhāna* or the re-establishment of the fires.

THE REGULAR SACRIFICES

A peculiarity of the daily, fortnightly, and four-monthly sacrifices is that they are addressed to more than one god.

The *agnihotra* (fire-offering) is to be performed daily, morning and evening. The main offering is milk, heated and mixed with water on the *gārhapatya* fire, into which and the *āhavanīya*, it is then offered. The *agnyupasthāna* (homage to the fires and the cow which supplied the milk) takes place in the evening only, when the performer mentions the name of his successor in this duty (generally his son).

The *darśapūrṇamāseṣṭi* (the new and full moon sacrifices) provides the norm of all sacrifices of the *iṣṭi* type. A cake for Agni and Soma at the full moon and one for Agni and Indra at the new moon constitute the essential feature. On the first day of the new moon sacrifice, which requires two days for its completion, the sacrificer takes the usual vows of abstinences and the fires are made ready. On the second day, the various stages of cake-preparation, from the rice-grain stage onwards, are gone through ; the altar is made ready and the sacrificer's wife is girded. After the laying on of kindling wood with the *sāmidhenī* verses, follow two libations of butter (*āghāras*) and the formal choosing of the *hotṛ* by the *adhvaryu*. The fore-offerings of butter to the kindling sticks and various invited deities, the *ājya* offerings to Agni and Soma, and finally the cake offerings to Agni and Indra (to Agni and Soma at the full moon, which is a one-day ceremony)—this is the sequence of the main ritual acts concluded by an oblation to Agni Sviṣṭakṛt in which all gods are invoked. The priests now partake of the offering and of the *iḍā* (holy milk libation) ; the Fathers are invoked to participate and the fees are dispensed. Next come the *anuyājas* (after-offerings) to the *barhis*, to *narāśaṁsa*, etc., followed by a prayer, and finally the bundle of sacred grass is thrown into the fire.

The three 'four-month' sacrifices are called also 'seasonal', because they are performed at the beginning of the spring, monsoon, and autumn seasons. The Maruts are the most prominent deities receiving offerings in all of them, along with a set of other gods peculiar to each. Five libations to Agni, Soma, Savitṛ, Sarasvatī, and Pūṣan begin each of the three sacrifices. For the firewood, that tree is selected which blossoms in the particular season and for the sacred *barhis*, the plants that sprout at the time. In the first four-month sacrifice, the *vaiśvadeva*, the five common libations are followed by a cake to the Maruts, a milk-mess to the All-gods (Viśvedevas), and a cake to Heaven and Earth. In the second, the *Varuṇa-praghāsa* sacrifice at the beginning of the rains, two figures of dough, representing a ram and ewe, and covered with wool, are sacrificed to Varuṇa and the Maruts, respectively, in milk-messes to promote the increase of flocks, and *karīra*

fruits are offered to procure rain and plenty. An expiatory sacrifice to Varuṇa, in which the wife of the sacrificer confesses to the names or number of her lovers (if any) and offers plates of porridge in the southern fire, is a very curious and interesting feature. In the third, the *sākamedha* sacrifice, performed in autumn, the southern fire comes into prominence in connection with the *pitṛ-yajña*, a sacrificial feast to the manes, which is an important feature of the *sākamedhas*. Another important element is an offering to Rudra Tryambaka, who, thus appeased, was expected to remove himself, in the interests of the flocks. The festival is followed by an offering to *Śunāsīrau*—the two deified parts of the plough—, evidently an agricultural rite.

The *āgrayaṇa-iṣṭi* or the sacrifice of the first fruit of the biennial harvest is another type of periodical sacrifices, belonging both to the Śrauta and Gṛhya cults, like the *darśapūrṇamāsa* sacrifices. A cake of barley in spring and of rice in autumn is offered to Indra and Agni, the All-gods, Heaven, and Earth also receiving offerings. The first-born of the calves during the year constitutes the fee.

THE OCCASIONAL OR SPECIAL SACRIFICES

Numerous variations of the *iṣṭi* type, modelled on the new and full moon sacrifices, with appropriate changes in the materials of the offerings, can be performed for the fulfilment of particular wishes.

The animal sacrifice is a fairly frequent one, both as an independent sacrifice and as part of the *soma* sacrifice, either of which may be looked upon as the *prakṛti* or norm of the other. As an independent sacrifice called the *nirūḍha-paśubandha* (or *paśubandha* briefly), it can be performed by an *āhitāgni* (one who has established the three fires) before partaking of meat for the first time and then once or twice a year in the northern course of the sun. The form of the offering is that in the new moon sacrifice, the animal takes the place of the milk offered to Indra. Normally, the rite occupies two days. The sacrificial post to which the victim is to be tied is erected in a hole, half within and half outside the altar. It is hallowed by unctions and *mantras* recited over it. The victim is bathed and tied to the post and anointed with butter; and subsequently to the *ājya* offerings, the usual procedure of the *darśapūrṇamāsa*, down to the fore-offerings, is gone through.

The *paryagnikaraṇa* which follows now is an important ceremony: A fire-brand is carried three times round the animal by way of describing a magic circle around it, to keep off evil spirits. When the victim is on its way to the place of immolation, imbued with the divine essence, the sacrificer touches it with the *vapāśrapaṇī* (the two spits to be used later

for roasting the omentum) and thus communicates it to himself. *Mantras* are now recited praying for forgiveness for the sin of the killing about to be perpetrated and declaring that the victim does not die but goes to the gods. The victim is quieted by strangulation, to avoid bloodshed, by the *śamitṛ* priests, while all the others present avert their faces and keep looking at the *āhavanīya*. The first and more important stage in the disposal of the victim is the extraction of the caul or omentum (*vapā*), after making an incision in it, and cooking and offering it to the gods. The blood is poured out to the *rākṣasas* and spirits. The spits are thrown into the fire. The distribution of three cows as presents closes this stage.

The second phase begins with the cutting of the carcass and preparation of a rice-cake, special portions of which constitute the Iḍā, a mystic deity. Certain sections of the victim's body are offered to the gods, others are eaten by the principal priests who also receive the *iḍā*. Finally come the eleven *anuyājas* including offerings to the *barhis*, the divine doors, etc. (in the order of the *Āprī* hymns of the *Ṛg-Veda*). The remaining butter and fat, the splinter, the staff and the *prastara* (bundle of grass) are all thrown into the fire, other implements being buried, lest the divine essence they have acquired should intrude into worldly life.

The *soma* sacrifice is the most important of all sacrifices. Though performed by kings and wealthy people, it was attended by lay spectators to such an extent as to make it a public event! It was a spring festival (it is plausibly suggested) performed originally at the beginning of the year, falling on the new or full moon day.

The *agniṣṭoma* is the model and fundamental form of the *soma* sacrifice and belongs to the *ekāha* (one-day) type. In all *soma* sacrifices, the *soma* is offered strictly within the framework of the three pressings (*savanas*) of the *soma* (morning, midday, and evening) and to a prescribed series of gods; Indra is the most important of them, the midday *savana* belonging to him exclusively, in addition to his share of the morning and evening pressings.

There is first of all, the formal choosing of the priests. They must be sixteen in number, even for the simplest *agniṣṭoma*. A site for the sacrifice is borrowed from the king. Then takes place the consecration (*dīkṣā*) of the sacrificer and his wife, which renders them fit for intercourse with the gods. Seclusion, silence, and abstinence from all food (except boiled milk) and sexual intercourse are some of the forms of austerities prescribed at this stage. There is enacted, next, the ritual farce of buying the *soma* in mock exchange for a cow of which the seller is deprived immediately! The *soma* is then borne on a cart to the sacrificial place where it is accorded a guest-reception. Now begin the three *upasad* days. On each *upasad* day

is performed twice the *pravargya* or 'hot-milk' sacrifice mentioned before. On the second *upasad* day is constructed the great altar on which the *soma* carts are placed. An animal sacrifice—the offering of a goat to Agni and Soma—takes place on the last *upasad* day. The *sutyā* day proper is heralded by the performance of the morning litany (*prātaranuvāka*) addressed to Agni, the Dawn, and the Aśvins. The juice is extracted from shoots of the *soma* plant by pressing with stones or mortar and pestle, and is purified by being passed slowly through a strainer of sheep's wool; then it is transferred to jars and mixed with milk. Minute details as to the drawing of the *soma* cups for offering and the recitations of the *śastras* and *stotras* are given. Another animal sacrifice takes place on this day of pressing, the victim being dedicated to Indra and Agni. Cake offerings, libations, and oblations are the order of the day. The rite is practically concluded with the *Āgni-Māruta Śastra* and formally by the ceremony of the *avabhṛtha* (carrying down to the water). The squeezed shoots of the *soma*, the sacrificial implements, the antelope-skin, and the girdles used since the consecration are thrown into the water. The sacrificer and his wife then go into the water, rub the backs of each other, and coming out of the water put on new clothes. Finally, offerings are made and verses addressed to Varuṇa and the bath itself.

Of the seven *soma* sacrifices, entitled *jyotiṣṭoma*, the *vājapeya* (draught of strength) shows some traces of a popular origin. It could be performed for the attainment of victory and power not only by kings, but also by any well-to-do member of the three higher castes. A conventional chariot race was a characteristic feature of it.

The royal consecration (*rājasūya*) was a public event in the sense that its pomp attracted members of the public, and prayers for the welfare of the country and the people formed part of the *mantras* recited. The sacrifice was, however, instituted by the king as an individual, there being, indeed, no sacrifice performed on behalf of the nation or community. It is in form a *soma* sacrifice, preceded by the usual *dīkṣā* ceremony, the *upasad* days, and other preliminary rites that last well over a year. On the day of the anointing (*abhiṣeka*, which is generally the first day of the Caitra month, exactly thirteen months after the opening of the preliminaries, the king, draped in regal raiment, takes a bow with three arrows from the *adhvaryu* and announces his anointment with an appropriate formula. He then steps forth in each of the different quarters and sits on a seat made of the wood of the *udumbara* tree, covered with a tiger-skin. He is anointed or besprinkled with a fluid compounded of butter, honey, different kinds of holy waters, and other ingredients, poured over him from a cup of *udumbara* wood. *Soma* libations and offerings follow next, after which he enacts a

mimic raid in his chariot on the cattle of his kinsfolk, at whom he discharges his arrows. He then sits on a throne covered with a tiger-skin and plays a mock-game of dice, with a cow as the stake, in which it is arranged that he wins. Then comes the concluding bath.

It was, however, in the *aśvamedha,* the ancient horse-sacrifice known even to the *Ṛg-Veda,* that the apex of regal splendour was reached. It was performed for the realization of the very highest imperial ambitions that a king could entertain, and was addressed to Prajāpati and the gods in the aggregate. It ranks as an *ahīna soma* sacrifice, having more than one *sutyā* day. The rite begins on the 8th or 9th day of the month of Phālguna, when the horse is bound and bathed. The horse is then consecrated near the fire, different types of cakes being offered in the three ensuing days. The horse is then set free to wander about at will, guarded by an escort of armed youths. During the year-long interval of its absence, various offerings and rites are performed, while tales of ancient kings are narrated by the *hotṛ* and lutes are played and chants sung from day to day. When the horse returns, a *soma* sacrifice with three *sutyā* days is performed. On the second *sutyā* day, the horse is sacrificed along with hundreds of victims, wild and tame, from the elephant to the bee (the *Ṛg-Veda* mentions the offering of a goat only to Pūṣan). Before the carcass is cut up, the chief queen lies down beside the dead horse (by way of a fertility spell), while an obscene dialogue between the priests and the other women of the king's harem is rehearsed. Before the offering of the omentum, *brahmodya* riddles are proposed and solved by the priests among themselves. The concluding bath takes place on the third *sutyā* day.

The *agni-cayana* or piling of the fire-altar with the heads of five victims—a man and four other sacrificial animals—, built into the lowest stratum of the altar, is so elaborate and complicated a rite that it could not be a frequent one. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* attributes the cult to a new teacher, Śāṇḍilya—i.e. other than Yājñavalkya, the reputed teacher of the main part of the Brāhmaṇa—, and says that the sacrifice of a man along with the other four victims was by no means an ancient custom and was, further, soon replaced by other (substituted) rites. As the heads of the five victims were to be walled up in the lowest layer of the edifice (the bodies being thrown in water), the use of the head of a man already killed by lightning or an arrow-shot seems to have sufficed.

Among other *ahīna* rites, there is the *sarva-medha* (the sacrifice of all) and numerous other forms.

All *soma* sacrifices with more than twelve 'pressing' days are *sattras.* The peculiarity of these *sattras* is that *all* the officiating priests are jointly and individually sacrificers. The model is the *dvādaśāha* or the *ahīna*

sacrifice having twelve pressing days, the rules only showing how it is to be built up to the *sattra* pattern. The most interesting *sattra* is the *gavām-ayana* (cows' walk) which lasts for one year, the astronomical or calendar landmarks of which correspond to the stages of the sacrifice (for example, the *viṣuvat* day becomes its central day). The maximum duration of a *sattra* may be any number of years, even one thousand.

The *sautrāmaṇī*, briefly described before, is classified as a *havir-yajña*, as it is not a *soma* sacrifice, *surā* being used as an offering in it, instead of the *soma*.

Finally, there are any number of expiatory rites, simple as well as elaborate, for grave sins as well as negligible errors in the performance of the sacrifice.

II. THE GṚHYA CEREMONIES OF THE VEDIC RITUAL

The non-personal rites: The distinction between the three fires of the Śrauta cult and the single fire of the householder was recognized as early as the *Ṛg-Veda*. Certain ceremonies, such as the morning and evening fire-service and the new and full moon sacrifices as well as some other cereal and animal sacrifices, are common to both the cults, the difference being one of elaboration only. On the other hand, the personal and family rites belong exclusively to the Gṛhya (domestic), and the *soma* sacrifice exclusively to the Śrauta cult.

The occasions for the setting up of the domestic fire for its uninterrupted maintenance were marriage, the death of the head of the family, or the division of the family property. The time prescribed is some auspicious forenoon of a bright fortnight in the *uttarāyaṇa* (northern course of the sun). The householder himself, as a rule, performed the ritual, the services of a *brahman* being optional, except at the *śūlagava* and *dhanvantari* sacrifices; the wife could deputize at the morning and evening fire-service, and the maintenance of the fire was the concern of all members of the family including a resident pupil.

The material is the same as at the Śrauta offerings, with the difference that the *soma* is never one of the offerings and that the animal victim is not very frequent. As a rule, at the end of a domestic rite, is performed a ceremony called *yajña-vāstu* in which a handful of *kuśa* grass, dipped in the *ājya* and besprinkled with water, is thrown into the fire with an invocation to Rudra.

The daily morning and evening offerings, after sunrise and sunset, are made of barley or rice (cooked or raw) to Sūrya and Prajāpati and to Agni and Prajāpati, respectively.

The five great sacrifices (*pañca-mahā-yajñas*) to be performed daily

are: (1) The sacrifice to the gods (*deva-yajña*) is made out of the food (prepared for the morning or evening meal) over which some milk, curds, or butter is poured, and is offered silently into the fire by the householder with his hands. (2) The sacrifice to the beings (*bhūta-yajña*) consists of oblations (*balis*) placed on the ground, inside the fire-chamber or outside, and offered to the four elements (*pṛthvī*, *ap*, *vāyu*, and *ākāśa*), to Prajāpati, to Kāma, and to the All-gods, and, finally, in the dustbin to the demons. (3) The remnants of the *balis*, besprinkled with water, are poured out towards the south to the *pitṛs*, that is the *pitṛ-yajña*. (4) The *brahma-yajña* consists of the *svādhyāya* or daily recitation of Vedic texts. (5) The sacrifice to men (*manuṣya-yajña*) is offered when a guest is fed or a beggar given food, before the householder takes his meal.

The new and full moon sacrifices are offered very much in the same way as those of the Śrauta cult, with the difference that, instead of the cakes, the mess of cooked food is prepared in the *sthālīpāka* manner. The preparation of the *ājya*, the *pavitrakas* (purifiers of *darbha* grass), and the *upastaraṇa* (under-spreading) and the *abhighāraṇa* (over-pouring) of the oblation with the *ājya* are other peculiarities of the Gṛhya proceedings.

There are also other periodical Gṛhya sacrifices: (1) The *Śrāvaṇa* sacrifice to the serpents takes place on the full moon day of the Śrāvaṇa month, in the monsoon, when the use of a high couch for sleeping upon becomes necessary for four months. Oblations of barley flour or cooked food are offered to the month and full moon of Śrāvaṇa, to Viṣṇu, and to the rainy season. Fried grain and barley flour are then mixed with butter and offered to the serpents. Water is next poured out into a new water-pot, for the serpents to wash themselves with and a comb, unguents, flowers, collyrium, and a mirror are offered to them for personal decoration. A *bali* to the divine serpents concludes the ceremony. This performance is repeated every night silently until (2) the ceremony of *pratyavarohaṇa* (re-descent) or the *āgrahāyaṇī* festival, which takes place on the full moon of Mārgaśīrṣa, when the temporary use of the high bedstead is given up. The ritual is nearly the same as in the *Śrāvaṇa* sacrifice. As the name *āgrahāyaṇī* indicates, the full moon of Mārgaśīrṣa probably coincided with the beginning of the New Year and so a renovation of the house, with a new coat of paint for the walls and the levelling of the floor, etc. is done.

The agricultural rites are, in a sense, seasonal or periodical. There are ritual ceremonies formally consecrating the various stages of agricultural operations: (1) The plough is set in motion for the first time under an appropriate *nakṣatra* (Rohiṇī or Jyeṣṭhā). (2) The sacrifice to Sītā (the rustic deity of the field-furrow) is offered on the field itself. These two rites take place just before the *Śrāvaṇa* sacrifice to the snakes. There are,

further, rites at (3) the sowing of the seed; (4) the reaping of the crop; (5) the threshing of the corn; (6) the putting of the grain into the barn; and (7) the partaking of the first fruits of the harvest.

The prosperity of cattle is ensured by many rites:

(1) The *śūlagava* (spit-ox) sacrifice, so called because an ox is offered to the spit-bearing Rudra, is the most important of these. A fine ox becomes a fit victim when it has cut its teeth. The offering takes place in spring or autumn, under an auspicious *nakṣatra*, about midnight, away from the village. The usual procedure of the animal sacrifice is followed with slight variations. Nothing belonging to the sacrifice is to be taken to the village and the sacrificer does not partake of the flesh. Some Gṛhya-Sūtras prescribe a form of this sacrifice in which no ox is killed, but three messes of boiled rice are offered to the bull (that is spared), and to a cow and calf, or to the fetish-images of these three, representing Śarva, Mīḍhuṣī, and Jayanta respectively.

(2) The *bauḍhyavihāra*, in which a lump of boiled rice besprinkled with *ājya* is placed in a basket of *palāśa* leaves, which is kept hanging on a tree for Rudra.

(3) The *sthālīpāka* offering to Kṣetrapati, represented by a bull, is put in leaves and placed on the beaten track of the cows without a fire.

(4) The ceremony of *vṛṣotsarga* (the letting loose of a bull) on the Kārttika full moon to ensure the good breeding of cattle.

(5) Some minor rites consisting of the recitation of appropriate formulas to ensure their health and safety.

Among the occasional ceremonies fall the following:

(1) Guest-reception: It is an elaboration of the daily *manuṣya-yajña*. There is an authorized list of guests, including a teacher, an officiating priest, a king, a *snātaka*, and a marriage-relation. A small reception-shed is prepared, with a couch or bed of grass placed in it as a seat. When the guest is seated, his feet are washed and *arghya* (water etc. as worship), *ācamanīya* (water for sipping), and *madhuparka* (honey-mixture) are offered, and then a cow is presented to him. The guest is then fed.

(2) The building of the house: The selection of the site is determined by the quality and condition of the soil, etc. The digging of pits for the posts, the erection of the posts along with a water-plant to prevent fire, and the putting up of the beams and the roof are all stages marked by ritual acts. The positions of the doors (especially the main door) is a matter of great care. The house-building is concluded by the *vāstuśānti* or the rite of the appeasement of the *vāstu* (site or house). A mess of sacrificial food is cooked and offered to Vāstoṣpati, the presiding deity of the house. Only

two Gṛhya-Sūtras prescribe an animal sacrifice for the *vāstuśānti* ceremony. The feeding of Brāhmaṇas and relatives concludes the ceremony.

(3) The *caitya* sacrifice: A *bali* is offered to the *caitya*, which is either a religious shrine or a memorial erected to the memory of a teacher or some other distinguished person.

The Personal or Family Sacraments: We may begin with the marriage sacrament. The main elements of the ceremony go back to the Indo-European period. The sacred domestic fire—the divine witness of the marriage and the constant companion of the married couple thereafter—practically is the only god worshipped. The main stages of the rite are: The wooer formally goes to the girl's house, and after both of them have taken a bath and the priests of both the families have offered *ājya* oblations into the domestic fire on behalf of them separately, the bridegroom grasps the hand of the bride (*pāṇi-grahaṇa*). The bridegroom then leads the bride three times round the fire (*pariṇayana*), and next makes her step on a stone (*aśmārohaṇa*), symbolic of the steadfastness which the stone imparts. Among the many offerings (*homas*) a special one is that of parched grain (*lājā*) made by the bride with hollowed (joined) hands into the fire. The most vital ceremony which is supposed, even today, to set the formal seal on marriage is the *sapta-padī* (the seven steps) which the couple take together in a northern or north-eastern direction. This is symbolic of their friendly co-operation (their marching in step) in married life. After sunset, the husband points out the pole-star, the Arundhatī star, and the Saptarṣis (Ursa Major) to the bride (this is supposed to ensure the stability of conjugal life). At the husband's home the couple eat together the sacrificial food cooked in the nuptial fire (to acquire a community of tastes in all matters). The wedding over, the couple pass three nights (or a longer period) of abstinence from salted or pungent food, *in chastity*. On the fourth day, the ceremony of the consummation of marriage, called appropriately the *caturthī karman* (the rite of the fourth night) or the *garbhādhāna* (impregnation), takes place.

The ceremony of *puṁsavana* (ensuring a male offspring) takes place generally in the third month of pregnancy.

The *sīmantonnayana* (parting of the hair) takes place any time from the fourth to the eighth month of the first pregnancy only. The husband stands behind the wife, attaches to her neck an *udumbara* twig, and parts her hair from the front backwards, first with *darbha* blades, then with a splinter of *vīratara* wood, etc. The use of the *udumbara* twig and the *vīratara* wood is intended to ensure fertility to the wife and exuberance and heroism to the child.

The *jātakarman* or birth-ceremony is to be performed immediately after birth. The father breathes three times on the child and then draws in his breath. He smears the child's tongue with a mixture of butter, honey, and curds taken from a golden vessel or spoon. The navel-string is now cut and the infant, after being washed, is given the breast.

On the tenth day after birth, the ceremony of *nāmakaraṇa* (naming) takes place for common use (as distinguished from the secret name known only to the parents, given immediately after birth).

The ceremony of *anna-prāśana* or the first feeding of the child with solid food takes place in the sixth month.

The *chūḍākaraṇa* (the rite of tonsure) takes place in the third year, as a rule, for a Brāhmaṇa child, and in the fifth and seventh years, for a Kṣatriya and Vaiśya child respectively. The tangled locks of the child are loosened and moistened with butter and a mixture of hot and cold water by the father, who symbolically plies the razor on the *darbha* blade that is put on the head, and then the barber steps in.

The *godāna* ceremony, similar in nature, is performed in the sixteenth or eighteenth year of the boy. In addition to the hair on the head, the beard, the hair under the arm-pits, and the nails are also now cut.

By far the most important sacrament in the life of a boy is the *upanayana* ('the leading or drawing near' of the boy to himself by the teacher), a kind of cultural rebirth of the boy. It takes place in his eighth, eleventh, or twelfth year, according to his caste. The boy is shaved, bathed, and dressed in a new garment, and wears the sacrificial cord over his left shoulder. Then, in front of the domestic fire, the preceptor winds a girdle three times round the boy from left to right so that it covers his navel and ties it into a threefold knot after the recitation of appropriate prayers. Then follows the initiation proper and the giving charge of the boy to the gods. The teacher touches, with his left hand, the left shoulder of the pupil and draws the boy's right hand towards himself with the *vyāhṛtis* reciting the *Sāvitrī* verse and an appropriate formula signifying the initiation. The teacher then seizes the pupil's right hand with his own right hand, exhorting him, in the words of a formula, to '*sip water, put on fuel, do service,* and *avoid sleep by day*'. He next touches with his right hand the region of the pupil's heart, with a formula that proclaims the union of their hearts, and recites a prayer imploring Indra, the goddess Sarasvatī, etc. to endow the initiate with intelligence and prays to the gods to take charge of the boy. The special uniform and equipment of this apprentice (varying according to his caste) consist of the skin of a deer (goat or cow), worn as an upper garment, a lower garment of a particular colour, and a staff of a particular wood (according to his caste). The staff is to be discarded along with the girdle

etc. at the end of his studentship, when a new staff is taken up. The boy is taught with great ceremony a famous stanza from the *Ṛg-Veda* (III.62.10), sacred to Savitṛ, in the *gāyatrī* metre (or it may be a different stanza, sacred to Savitṛ from the *Ṛg-Veda* in the *triṣṭubh* or *jagatī* metres, according as the boy is a Kṣatriya or Vaiśya). During the period of studentship, the intellectual training of the boy consisted of a study of the Veda preceded by the recitation of the *Sāvitrī* stanza. His physical and moral training was assured by the observance of certain obligatory vows and duties, such as gathering fuel in the morning and the tending of the teacher's fire with it, begging for food in the village, and performing every morning and evening the *sandhyā* (twilight devotion), which consisted chiefly of a repetition of the *Sāvitrī* stanza, preceded by the *vyāhṛtis*, and certain auspicious Vedic hymns. He strictly observed chastity and abstained from certain foods.

The return of the student to his parental home from the teacher's house, after the successful completion of his period of studentship, was signalized or formalized by the rite of *samāvartana* (lit. 'return') which took place just before his actual re-entry into his parental abode. Its main feature was a ceremonial bath before his introduction into the wordly life, which he, now called a *snātaka* (one who has taken the bath), could begin, by marrying and founding a household. The bath is preceded by a shave and followed by a lot of anointing and salving as well as decoration with a garland and a few ornaments, such as a pellet of *badara* wood tied to his left hand, a pellet of gold worn round the neck, and two ear-rings. He takes up a new staff of a different wood also, and proceeds to the place where a formal reception awaits him with an *arghya*.

III. FUNERAL RITES AND ANCESTRAL OFFERINGS IN THE VEDIC RITUAL

The variations of ritual procedure in the Śrauta and Gṛhya cults, in the sphere of the sacrifices to the gods, are due naturally to the use of three fires in the former and one fire in the latter. But in the sphere of the offerings to the dead and the manes, only one of the three fires—the *dakṣiṇa*—is in use even in the Śrauta cult, like the single domestic fire of the Gṛhya cult, the other two fires being paid only formal and nominal homage.

Two conceptions of the Fathers must be clearly distinguished: the one comprising the distant, half-forgotten, and almost mythical ancestors, the *pitṛs* (or manes); and the other pertaining to the Fathers who have but lately departed, the *pretas*. The *śrāddha* ceremonies of the Gṛhya cult embody both these concepts. The first finds expression in the daily *pitṛ-yajña*, the monthly *śrāddha*, and the *aṣṭakā* and *anvaṣṭakya* rites, in all of which the *pitṛs* are honoured and receive oblations like the gods. The

second concept is embodied in the funeral ritual following immediately after death and in the *ekoddiṣṭa* and *sapiṇḍīkaraṇa śrāddhas.*

As the continuance of the homage to the dead from one generation to another in a family depends on the continuance of the family line, the production of offspring is regarded as one of the principal duties of a householder.

The ritual texts recognize only cremation, which therefore must be adjudged the normal mode of disposing of the dead in the Vedic period. The only burial rites, which the texts describe, pertain to the bones of the cremated dead, which are interred with ceremony, and the burial of children under two years of age.

THE RITUAL OF THE DISPOSAL OF THE DEAD

The hair and nails of the dead person are cut off, and the dead body is washed, anointed, garlanded, and clothed in a new garment. It is then borne by men or taken in a cart drawn by cows to the *śmaśāna* (crematorium) and placed on the funeral pyre (in the midst of three fires produced from the three sacred fires, if the deceased, as an *āhitāgni*, had maintained them). The wife of the deceased is then made to lie down on the pyre by the side of the dead body (and if the deceased was a Kṣatriya, his bow is placed in his hand). Her brother-in-law or some other representative of the husband then makes her rise from the pyre with the Ṛg-Vedic stanza X.18.8 (and the bow is either taken off, with the next stanza, or, according to the Gṛhya-Sūtras, is bent, broken, and thrown on to the pyre). That the ritual does not contemplate the burning of the widow is certain; her lying on the pyre and her subsequent recall to life are only symbolical of her immolation. If the deceased was an *āhitāgni*, such of his sacrificial utensils as are made of stone, copper, or earthenware are taken by the son, the rest being burnt with the corpse in the *śālāgni*. A goat (mentioned as a share of the funeral fire even in the *Ṛg-Veda*) and a cow are sacrificed, and the flesh, the omentum, and other parts of the cow are placed on the various parts of the dead body and burned with it. According to the Gṛhya ritual, it is when the dead body is being burned that the dead is addressed with the Ṛg-Vedic verses X.14.7, 8, 10, 11; 16.1-6; 17.3-6; 18.10-13, etc., exhorting him 'to go forth by those ancient paths whereon the Fathers of old have gone, to meet the two kings, Yama and Varuṇa, and gather himself to the Fathers, to leave all blemish behind, to run past the four-eyed brindled dogs—the two sons of Saramā', etc. If the deceased was *not* an *āhitāgni*, the body is burned silently.

After the burning, the mourners (chiefly *sapiṇḍas* up to the seventh degree) return, never once looking back, bathe, and offer libations of water.

On the threshold of the house, they sip water and touch purifying and auspicious things, like water, fire, cow-dung, etc., and then enter it.

The place of the burning is cooled by sprinkling over it a mixture of milk and water and reciting the Ṛg-Vedic verses (X.16.13 ff.). On the third day, but usually on the tenth day, the gathering of the bones takes place. The urn containing the bones is deposited in a pit, the deceased being addressed with the verse: 'Approach, Mother Earth' etc. (*Ṛ.V.*, X.18.10).

Some of the Ṛg-Vedic *mantras* cited in the ritual above speak of the funeral fire as conducting the *preta* (the 'departed' one) directly to the manes (*pitṛs*), but the later (Sūtra) ritual lays down that only the ceremony of *sapiṇḍīkaraṇa* (a *śrāddha*) can secure the admission of a *preta* to the order of the manes. This ceremony takes place on the twelfth day after death, if the son of the deceased (an *āhitāgni*) wants to maintain the Śrauta fires, but otherwise, and generally, at the end of one year from death. Four water-pots are filled with sesame, scents, and water (one for the *preta* and three for the father, grandfather, and great-grandfather of the *preta*) and four *piṇḍas* (lumps) are prepared. The performer pours the contents of the pot of the *preta* into the pots of the three Fathers with *mantras*. The first lump (that for the *preta*) is then distributed on or over the other three lumps with the *mantras* (*Ṛ.V.*, X.191.3-4). Hereafter the *preta* is ranked as the first among the Fathers, who number only three, the great-grandfather of the *preta* being automatically dropped (as he is now promoted to the class of the half-mythical manes). This is because of the rule in the Śruti: 'There can be no fourth *piṇḍa*.'

But until this *sapiṇḍīkaraṇa* takes place (i.e. normally, for a whole year after death), a special *śrāddha* called the *ekoddiṣṭa* (addressed or offered to *one* only) is performed on every new moon day.

Only the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* and the allied *Kātyāyana Śrauta-Sūtra* mention the ceremony of the erection of a memorial to the dead, a long time after death. The buried bones are exhumed at night and re-buried next morning in a secluded spot away from the village and a mound erected over them. The mourners return, after placing a barrier between the living and the dead (in the memorial mound). The *Ṛg-Veda* (X.18.3-4) refers to a stone as such a barrier.

THE ANCESTRAL OFFERINGS

The subsequent offerings begin after the admission of the *preta* to the order of the *pitṛs*. The most important among them is the monthly *śrāddha*, taking place always in the afternoon on the *parvan* day of the new moon and therefore called *pārvaṇa*, its exact counterpart in the Śrauta cult being the *piṇḍa-pitṛ-yajña*,

where the *dakṣiṇa* fire only is used. Food consisting of rice (chiefly) and other offering-material is prepared and an odd number of Brāhmaṇas (at least three) is formally invited to represent the father, the grandfather, and the great-grandfather. After the usual rites, the performer makes oblations of *ājya* and other food to each of the three Fathers naming them and repeating the Vedic verse (*Ṛ.V.*, X.15.13), with suitable variations of the word '*pitaraḥ*' in it in the case of the last two Fathers. Finally, after offering the *sviṣṭakṛt* oblation, he feeds the Brāhmaṇas, and uses the remaining food for the subsequent rites, which are performed in a spot in the south-east. Here, three pits are dug and bestrewn with southward pointed *darbha* grass, a fire-brand being placed beside them. Three jars (of metal, stone, and clay) are placed near the pits and water and sesame put into them. The performer then takes up one vessel, and pours water in each of the three pits inviting the three Fathers by name to bathe themselves. The remnants of food are then made into three *piṇḍas* of equal size and transferred to the pits. The three Fathers are now invoked by name, each separately, to partake of them. He then pours water on the lumps and adds collyrium and salve to them. He also puts down flakes of wool representing a garment and invokes the Fathers to anoint and clothe themselves. The performer then returns from the place where the *piṇḍa* offering has taken place.

Next come the *aṣṭakās* (eighth-day ceremonies). Generally three *aṣṭakās* are mentioned, namely, those performed on the eighth day, following the full moon of the Pauṣa, Māgha, and Phālguna months. Āśvalāyana adds a fourth, that in the Mārgaśīrṣa month, but allows the option of celebrating one only, called the *ekāṣṭakā* or middle *aṣṭakā*, in the month of Māgha, extending over three days (7th to the 9th *tithis*). As regards the first *aṣṭakā*, the simplest procedure (according to Śāṅkhāyana) is to sacrifice vegetables and then to offer the oblation to Agni Sviṣṭakṛt. According to Gobhila and Pāraskara, *apūpas* (cakes) are a speciality of this *aṣṭakā* which is even named as the *apūpāṣṭakā*. Grains prepared (i.e. pounded, husked, and winnowed) in the *sthālīpāka* way are cooked into a *caru* (mess of boiled grains). Then eight cakes are prepared and *ājya* poured over them twice after they are baked. Then the prescribed portions are cut off from the *caru* and the cakes and sacrificed with the words 'To *aṣṭakā, svāhā*'.

In the case of the middle *aṣṭakā*, on the day preceding the eighth day, boiled rice with and without sesame, rice, milk, or cakes made of ground grain are sacrificed with eight verses from the Ṛg-Vedic hymn X.15. On the next day, the sacrifice of an animal (a cow) takes place along with that of a mess of cooked food. The Brāhmaṇas are fed after the oblation to Agni Sviṣṭakṛt.

The *anvaṣṭakya* (after-*aṣṭakā*) rite follows all the three *aṣṭakās* or, as is usual, the middle one only. It is very much like a conventional *śrāddha* ceremony with one or two special features.

One more *aṣṭakā* on the 'Māgha' day, sometime after the full moon day of the month of Bhādrapada in the rainy season, is referred to by the *Āśvalāyana* and *Hiraṇyakeśi Gṛhya-Sūtras*. The ceremonial procedure is very much like that in a *pārvaṇa śrāddha*, the use of flesh being optional.

Finally may be mentioned the *pitṛ-yajña* or *mahā-pitṛ-yajña* of the Śrauta cult. The *piṇḍas* are offered in this ceremony to the more distant Fathers, namely, those of the sixth, fifth, and fourth degrees and not to the first, second, and third degree Fathers, as is usual.

There are further special or occasional *śrāddhas* performed to celebrate happy events such as birth, marriage, etc. and are called *vṛddhi śrāddhas*. They are performed also to commemorate the dedication of wells, pools, etc. Very naturally, the Fathers are described here as *nāndīmukhas* (of festive faces) instead of as *aśrumukhas* (of tearful countenance). A different ritual procedure is adopted, which approximates to that in the sacrifices to the gods. The movements are, for example, from left to right; barley is used instead of sesame; and the number of Brāhmaṇas is even, not odd.

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THE VEDĀṄGAS

THE Vedāṅgas are a class of literature auxiliary to the proper cultivation and understanding of the Vedic texts and their application in rituals and consist of the following six subjects: (1) *śikṣā* (phonetics), (2) *kalpa* (ritual),[1] (3) *vyākaraṇa* (grammar), (4) *nirukta* (etymology), (5) *chandas* (metrics), and (6) *jyotiṣa* (astronomy). Although the word '*vedāṅga*' literally means 'limb (*aṅga*) of the Veda', and although the Vedāṅgas are generally included by literary historians in Vedic literature, they do not, in the orthodox view, form part of the Veda, which is 'Śruti' or 'divine revelation', the only working definition of which is: 'the sum-total of Mantras and Brāhmaṇas'. This revealed scripture is supposedly not composed by any human authors but simply 'seen' by the *ṛṣis* and, as such, is sharply distinguished from the literature called 'Smṛti' (literally 'memory' or 'tradition') composed by human authors—a literature which is held to be authoritative only in so far as it is based on something corresponding to it in the Śruti. The Vedāṅgas, which originally meant 'subjects of instruction in a Vedic school, subserving and aiding the preservation of the Veda', fall under the category of 'Smṛti', though euphemistically called 'the limbs of the Veda'.

THE GENESIS OF THE VEDĀṄGAS

During the Brāhmaṇa period, the *mantras* of the Vedas were preserved by oral tradition only. When, at the end of this period, the spoken language drifted far away from the language of the Śruti, which was felt to be as antique as it was sacred, the necessity naturally arose of preserving intact the inner substance as well as the external form of the Śruti. Even in the Brāhmaṇas, there are statements that violence is done to the meaning of Śruti passages if they are pronounced improperly. It was therefore felt necessary to lay down general rules on the proper pronunciation and accentuation of the *mantras* and their metre, especially when differences in their pronunciation were sanctioned by the traditions of the different seats or schools of Brāhmaṇic learning. Thus were formulated *śikṣā* and *chandas*.

With regard to the inner substance of the *mantras*, the difficulties were far greater—a situation testified to by the fact that there appear different ritual contexts or liturgical settings for the Ṛg-Vedic *mantras* even in the

[1] As *kalpa* has been dealt with in a separate chapter on 'Vedic Rituals', the subject is not treated here. Similarly, *vyākaraṇa* and *nirukta* have not been treated here in detail as they have been treated in the chapter on 'Yāska and Pāṇini' also.

later Vedic Saṁhitās and endless discussions occur in the Brāhmaṇas regarding their meaning and the propriety of their employment in particular contexts. *Vyākaraṇa* and *nirukta* tried to wrestle with the problems of exegesis of the *mantras,* and *kalpa* and *jyotiṣa* tackled the question of the 'how and when' of their liturgical employment in sacrifices. Thus the six Vedāṅgas were formulated and systematized within the curricula and syllabi of the various Vedic schools.

THEIR LITERARY STYLE

The Vedāṅgas are composed for the most part in the *sūtra* (aphoristic) style ; even when some of them (like the works of Śaunaka) are composed in mixed *ślokas,* they are quoted as 'Sūtras', and are ascribed to authors who are otherwise well known as Sūtra-authors (*sūtrakāras*). It is noteworthy that the Vedāṅgas inaugurated a new literary epoch, with their unique *sūtra* style.

The word '*sūtra*' means 'thread, string, or clue'. A Sūtra work strings together the salient points of a text or subject, systematically, in short sentences compressed into the most concise form. The many Brāhmaṇa and Brāhmaṇa-like passages in the midst of the Sūtras make it very probable that the *sūtra* style developed from the prose of the Brāhmaṇas, which consists almost exclusively of short sentences and leaves unsaid all that is supposed to be explained in oral presentation and instruction.

The mass of details in various subjects—ritualistic, religious, and philosophical—that accumulated in the later Saṁhitās and Brāhmaṇas and in the floating tradition had reached such staggering proportions that it must have imposed an unbearable strain on the memory of the Vedic student. The urgent need of compressing and reducing this vast and diffuse material into a reasonably small size and giving it a systematic shape was answered by the formulation of the *sūtra* style.

REFERENCE TO THE VEDĀṄGAS IN EARLY LITERATURE

The earliest reference to the number of the Vedāṅgas as six occurs in the *Ṣaḍviṁśa Brāhmaṇa* (IV.7) of the *Sāma-Veda,* where they are said to constitute the limbs of the goddess Svāhā. The *Āpastamba Kalpa-Sūtra* (II.4.8), in a different order than the usual, the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (I.1.5.), and the *Caraṇavyūha* enumerate the six Vedāṅgas, in the traditional order, while the *Manu Smṛti* (III.185) mentions only their number as six.[2]

Obviously, the Vedāṅgas, as subjects of study, must have interested the *ṛṣis* of the Brāhmaṇas and the Saṁhitās, not excluding the *Ṛg-Veda Saṁhitā,*

[2] The commentary on the *Śākala Prātiśākhya* (XIV), which enumerates *śikṣā* as the fourth instead of as the first, has *chandoviciti* for *chandas,* and *jyotiṣām-ayanam* for *jyotiṣa.*

from the earliest times. The Vedāṅga doctrines must, then, be sought for in the Saṁhitās, Brāhmaṇas, and the Sūtras, step by step, rather than in the short and barren tracts, traditionally designated as the Vedāṅgas and appended later to the manuscripts of the Vedas. These tracts, mistaken in the beginning by scholars for the real Vedāṅgas, represent but the last attempts, though not with full success, to abridge and simplify earlier developments in their respective fields, under titles sanctioned by antiquity.

In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (VII.1), Nārada, while detailing the extent of his knowledge, refers to (i) *nakṣatra-vidyā*, (ii) the *veda* of the Vedas, (iii) *deva-vidyā*, and (iv) *brahma-vidyā*, of which the first evidently means *jyotiṣa* or astronomy; the last three have been explained as meaning, respectively, (ii) *vyākaraṇa*, (iii) *nirukta*, and (iv) *śikṣā*, *chandas*, and *kalpa*. According to a commentator on the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (II.4.10), just as 'Itihāsa' and 'Purāṇa' in the sense of 'epic stories' and 'sections on topics like creation and the first cause' form integral parts of the Brāhmaṇas, so are the Vedāṅgas incorporated in the Brāhmaṇas under different and unusual heads such as *upaniṣads* (mysteries), *ślokas* (verses), *sūtras* (rules), *vyākhyāna* (comments), and *anu-vyākhyāna* (explanations) which are the titles of particular Brāhmaṇa passages. We shall, therefore, in dealing with each Vedāṅga separately, try to trace, however briefly, the beginnings of an interest in it right from the days of the *Ṛg-Veda Saṁhitā* to those of the Sūtras.

I. ŚIKṢĀ (PHONETICS)

PRE-PRĀTIŚĀKHYA LITERATURE

As the Vedas were transmitted in the early days by oral tradition, and not writing, it is but natural that interest in phonetics should be evinced right from the very beginning. Vāc or personified speech is celebrated in one whole hymn in the *Ṛg-Veda* (X.125), where the deity Vāc describes herself, and the major portion of another hymn (*Ṛ.V.*, X.71) is devoted to the same deity. Particularly interesting is the verse (*Ṛ.V.*, I.164.45): 'Speech is measured out in four parts (steps, stages, or grades) . . . The three[3] of them which are set in secret, they do not emit (or circulate); the fourth (part) of speech, men speak.'[4]

[3] The three grades of speech, deposited in secret, which move not, are explained in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (IV.1.3.16) as being inarticulate (*anirukta*) and as the three progressively higher stages represented by (i) the hissing of serpents or the humming of insects; (ii) the notes of birds; and (iii) the inarticulate speech of brutes.

[4] This description probably gave the cue to the later mystic division of speech into *parā*, *paśyantī*, and *madhyamā*, originating from the navel, the lungs, and the throat, respectively, i.e. the three unvoiced stages, and the fourth, the *vaikharī*, expressed through the tongue.

Geldner[5] thinks that the fourfold division of speech is on the lines of that of the Puruṣa in *Ṛg-Veda,* X.90.3: 'Three parts of it represent the immortal portion in heaven and the fourth part of it is all these creatures.' He refers to a passage in the *Kāṭhaka Saṁhitā* (II.79.9) which says that speech entered into men and the gods, and the surplus went over to the trees and plants. The *Maitrāyaṇī Saṁhitā* (III.70.16) also speaks of the fourfold division of speech.[6]

According to Professor Varma,[7] three stages in the development of language are mentioned in the *Ṛg-Veda*: (i) inarticulate speech (I.164.45); (ii) primitive articulate speech (X.71.1); and (iii) language proper (X.71.2). As regards his criticisms that 'a strict cleavage between inarticulate and articulate speech may be open to question' and that 'the creation of language by men, if strictly intended, may suggest that language was independent of natural development', the writer thinks that the *Ṛg-Veda* does not lay down such a strict cleavage and suggests not the creation but only the manifestation in an articulate form of (thought) language by men.

The *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* says, '*Vāc* is verily an ocean; it is never exhausted'. It prescribes (XII.73) *madhyamā vāc* (intermediate speech) for the *stotriya* verses, as refining the soul.[8]

The *Aitareya Āraṇyaka* tries to throw light on the distinctive and mutually distinguishable aspects of sounds through different comparisons. In II.2.1, it compares first the consonants to nights and the vowels to days; next the consonants are compared to the body, the voice to the soul, and the fricatives to the breath. This and similar other passages (III.2.2 and 5) hinted at the comparative solidity of the plosives as they are compared to the earth or the bones. When, further, the vowels are compared to the marrow and the semi-vowels to flesh and blood, the idea seems to be to indicate the character of the vowel as the basic sound in the theory of syllabification. Another remarkable passage (III.1.5.) reveals the advanced stage of phonetic studies, when *saṁhitā* is described as a pronunciation of two syllables, neither entirely separated nor united—a view acceptable to modern science, namely, that basically syallabic division is a relative one.

The traditional title for phonetics '*Śikṣā*' appears for the first time in the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (I.2), which gives a bare enumeration of the six elements constituting it, namely, *varṇa* (individual sounds), *svara* (accent),

[5] *Der Ṛg-Veda,* p. 213.
[6] Compare also the association of Indra with speech in the *Taittirīya Saṁhitā* (VII.4.7).
[7] *Critical Studies in the Phonetic Observations of Indian Grammarians* (=*CSPOIG*).
[8] If the traditional data (*CSPOIG,* p. 2) of the *Āśvalāyana Śrauta-Sūtra* (VII.11) are based on the actual occurrence in the time of the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* of the *nyūṅkha* pronunciation which is prescribed generally during the recitation of certain verses on the fourth day of the *navarātra* ceremony, then, this would indicate a considerably advanced stage of phonetic studies even during this period (*c.* 1000 800 B.C.).

mātrā (quantity), *bala* (organs of pronunciation), *sāman* (delivery), and *santāna* (euphonic laws). According to Sāyaṇa, the 'midway' position of the chapter on phonetics (Śikṣānuvāka) between the ceremonial and philosophical portions (since this Upaniṣad forms part of the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*) ensures its utility for both of them.

The meagreness of the material on *śikṣā* in the Brāhmaṇas and Āraṇyakas is probably due to its being superseded and lost by the rise of the Prātiśākhyas later. Its scope was restricted, so far, to the teaching of correct pronunciation involving rudimentary instruction in individual sounds, accent, quantity, and the chanting of Vedic verses (as seen in the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* above).

THE PRĀTIŚĀKHYA LITERATURE

The Prātiśākhyas were treatises formally embodying the peculiarities of accent, of *saṁhitā* and *krama* (order) readings of *pragṛhya* vowels, and of the separations of words in particular schools. The so-called irregularities and exceptions that were thus preserved were more apparent than real, as they were due not so much to corruptions as to the elasticity and freedom of the old sacred language which was fast becoming obsolete, and were, in certain cases, a record of ancient dialectal differences. The general laws formulated therefrom became later the phonetic basis of a grammar like that of Pāṇini and thus a scientific study of language was begun.

ŚĀKHĀ, CARAṆA, AND PARIṢAD

Since a commentator like Viṣṇumitra speaks of the *Ṛk Prātiśākhya* as a *pārṣada*, the distinction between *śākhā*, *caraṇa*, and *pariṣad* must be stated. The word '*prātiśākhya*' means literally 'belonging to each *śākhā*'. '*Śākhā*' does not mean a 'school' or 'a portion of the Veda', though it may be used loosely in this sense, but a particular traditional text or recension of the Veda, held as authoritative in a particular Vedic school. '*Caraṇa*' indicates a body of people who, though pledged to the reading and study of a particular *śākhā*, have a wider curriculum which may include other texts like a law-book, which will go under the name of the *caraṇa*, but cannot be comprised under a *śākhā*. Distinct from both *śākhā* and *caraṇa* is the *pariṣad*, which, according to the law-codes, is an assembly of Brāhmaṇas, the members of which fulfil certain conditions as regards age and qualification. In other words, it is a Brāhmaṇic settlement to the traditional library of whose members may belong not only a Prātiśākhya, but other texts as well. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* (VI.2) refers to a *pariṣad* of the Pañcālas which was competent to give decisions on all points on which their advice may be sought

by the people under their jurisdiction. Members of any *caraṇa* might belong to such a *pariṣad*.

THE NUMBER OF PRĀTIŚĀKHYAS

Professor Varma[9] holds that there is no evidence to suppose that there were once as many Prātiśākhyas as there were *śākhās* of each Veda and that a Prātiśākhya was a treatise on phonetics applicable to a group of *śākhās* of a particular Veda. Although we have now only one Prātiśākhya extant belonging to each Veda, each of them belongs avowedly to one *śākhā* only of each of the four Vedas. The *Pratijñā-pariśiṣṭa* says that for the fifteen *śākhās* of the Vājasaneyins there were as many law-codes and manuals for the regulation of accents ; which latter description could only suit text-books like the Prātiśākhyas. Similarly, Kumārila in his *Tantra-vārttika* (V.1.3) says that for each *caraṇa*, there was a special text or recension of the Gṛhya and Dharma law-code, just in the same manner as there was a Prātiśākhya. It seems reasonable therefore to hold that, although everyone of the many *śākhās* may not have possessed a complete Prātiśākhya, one Prātiśākhya for each of the principal *śākhās* at least existed separately. For example, the Prātiśākhya of Śaunaka is so perfect and complete, and quotes the opinions of so many other authorities on grammar and phonetics, that it appears extremely probable that his work superseded the Prātiśākhyas of the other *śākhās* of the *Ṛg-Veda*, and is therefore held as authoritative for the two *śākhās* of the *Ṛg-Veda* that have survived, namely, the Śākala and the Bāṣkala. It is, besides, very artificial to take the word '*śākhā*' in the title 'Prātiśākhya' in the sense of 'the whole group of *śākhās* of a Veda', instead of in the very natural sense of 'a *śākhā*'.

THE CHARACTER OF THE PRĀTIŚĀKHYAS

The rigorous insistence of the Prātiśākhyas on accurate pronunciation inevitably implied a minute observation of phonetic phenomena in the recitation of Vedic texts. No wonder the title '*śikṣā*' itself came to be applied later to the Prātiśākhyas. We may demarcate between the respective spheres of the Śikṣās and the Prātiśākhyas thus: The sounds of the alphabet enumerated in the Śikṣās (68 or 64 in number) or the rules of pronunciation taught by them are common to secular and Vedic pronunciation and apply to all *śākhās*, but the Prātiśākhyas specify or select only the sounds peculiar to their own *śākhā*. The proper scope of the Prātiśākhyas was the specification for, and adaptation to, their own *śākhā* of the sounds which they do not trouble to enumerate, evidently presupposing such enumeration in earlier Śikṣā treatises of a general character. The traditional object of the

[9] *CSPOIG.*

Prātiśākhyas is also to explain the mutual relation of the *pada-* and *saṁhitā-pāṭhas.*

If phonetics were the sole basis of the Prātiśākhyas, they would have treated the individual sounds in relation to the *saṁhitā-pāṭha* only; but the starting point of their observations is the *pada-pāṭha,* where the *pada* appears in its strictly grammatical form including the suffix and the terminations. So grammar also was partly the basis of these texts. No surprise is occasioned therefore by the statement of the *Ātharvaṇa Prātiśākhya* (I.1) that its object is a description of the characteristic features of the four parts of speech, namely, the noun, the verb, the prefix, and the particle in the *saṁhitā-* and the *pada-pāṭhas.*

THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE EXTANT PRĀTIŚĀKHYAS

Only a relative chronology of the Prātiśākhyas can be attempted here.[10] Professor Varma discovered that a passage in the *Taittirīya Prātiśākhya* on the definition of high and low accent (XXII.9-10) is explained word by word in the *Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali commenting on Pāṇini, I.2.29-30. Since elsewhere also Patañjali refers to the Taittirīyas, it is very probable that he knew the *Taittirīya Prātiśākhya.* So 150 B.C., the accepted definite date of Patañjali, becomes its lower limit. Since the *Ṛk Prātiśākhya,* the oldest of the Prātiśākhyas, quotes Yāska, the upper limit is 500 B.C. (if not earlier). The *Ṛk Prātiśākhya* and the *Vājasaneyi Prātiśākhya,* with their crude verbosity in contrast with the concise style of Pāṇini (400 B.C.), are admitted as pre-Pāṇinian.

As regards the *Taittirīya Prātiśākhya,* although a few grammatical terms used by Pāṇini are known to it, its substance must be pre-Pāṇinian, because there is no trace of the influence of Pāṇini in its treatment. The core of the *Ātharvaṇa Prātiśākhya* was probably earlier, and in no case later than the *Vājasaneyi Prātiśākhya.* The later phases or parts of the *Taittirīya, Ātharvaṇa,* and *Vājasaneyi Prātiśākhyas* seem to be post-Pāṇinian. Last of all comes the Prātiśākhya of the *Sāma-Veda*—the *Ṛktantra-vyākaraṇa*—which, nevertheless, seems to have been composed when Sanskrit, to which it refers as a *bhāṣā,* was yet a spoken language.

THE EXTANT PRĀTIŚĀKHYAS

The extant Prātiśākhya of the *Ṛg-Veda* is the *Śākala Prātiśākhya* of Śaunaka which professes to follow the Śaiśirīya Śākhā, a sub-branch of the Śākala Śākhā. There is no manuscript of the *Ṛg-Veda* in which the rules

[10] This sketch is based on Professor S. Varma's book, the author's debt to which, in this article as a whole, cannot be overstated.

of this Prātiśākhya are followed, probably because these rules were not intended for any written literature at all.

The *Taittirīya Prātiśākhya* of the *Black Yajur-Veda* quotes several *caraṇas* of this Veda and alludes in its latest parts to the Mīmāṁsakas, not mentioned in any other Prātiśākhya. Chapters II, VIII, and XVI of the work seem to be the older ones, constituting the core, as it were, while chapters I and XVII-XIX appear to be later additions.

The extant Prātiśākhya of the *White Yajur-Veda*, though known as the *Vājasaneyi Prātiśākhya* belongs to the Kātyāyanīyas, a subdivision of the Mādhyandina Śākhā, which is itself a sub-branch of the Vājasaneyins. Some *sūtras* of this Prātiśākhya are repeated word by word in Pāṇini.

The Prātiśākhya of the *Atharva-Veda*, called also the *Saunakīya Caturādhyāyikā*,[11] is a treatise in four chapters belonging to the Śaunakīya school, a *caraṇa* of the Atharva-Vedins. The special references to the *ātharvaṇa* sacrifices and rituals preclude the supposition that the Śaunaka of the *Ṛk Prātiśākhya* had anything to do with this Prātiśākhya, and yet there is some evidence of a connection with Śākalya and the Śākalas.

The *Ṛktantra-vyākaraṇa*, the Prātiśākhya of the *Sāma-Veda*, is post-Pāṇinian, though not as recent as it is supposed. The *Puṣpa-Sūtra*, another Prātiśākhya of the *Sāma-Veda*, contains the text and the melodies of the *sāman* chants and observations on phonetic and linguistic facts.

THE ŚIKṢĀ WORKS

The *Pāṇinīya Śikṣā* is a *śloka* (verse) compilation ascribed to Piṅgala, the younger brother of Pāṇini, whose opinions it professes to follow, though it mentions his name once only in the beginning and at the end. Its *ślokas*, numbering sixty, are very modern as compared to those in Śaunaka's *Prātiśākhya*. A smaller version of it, consisting of twenty-two verses, occurs in the *Agni Purāṇa*. It does not mention even the name of Pāṇini. It could not be the prototype of the Prātiśākhyas, because its views on *r*, *ṛ*, and *ḷ* differ radically from those of the Prātiśākhyas. Even its substance does not belong to a very early period, as it is common to several other Śikṣās. Nevertheless, being the most complete of all the Śikṣās, extant in two recensions belonging to the *Ṛg-Veda* and the *Yajur-Veda*, it has wielded great influence over the other Śikṣās which borrow freely from it.

The number of Śikṣās known comes to sixty-five in all. In the *Śikṣā-saṅgraha* (Banaras Edn.) are published thirty-one. Nineteen others,

[11] The *Atharva-Veda Prātiśākhya*, edited by Vishva Bandhu (Punjab University, Lahore, 1923), is different from *Saunakīya Caturādhyāyikā*, which has been edited and translated as an *Atharva-Veda Prātiśākhya* by W. D. Whitney (New Haven, 1862)—Winternitz, *History of Indian Literature* (Calcutta University, 1927), I. p. 284, f.n.4.

in manuscript, have been examined by Professor Varma. If the common material borrowed by a number of them from the *Pāṇinīya Śikṣā* is ignored, the residuum contains original discussions of certain important phonetic topics, not treated in the Prātiśākhyas, such as the detailed account of *svarabhakti* after the *svarita* accent. Many others, however, are just catalogues of certain sounds in the Vedas. For example, the *Māṇḍavī Śikṣā* gives a list of words in the *Yajur-Veda* containing the consonant *b*, and the famous *Bhāradvāja* and *Siddhānta Śikṣās* catalogue certain words containing different sounds in an alphabetical order. The Śikṣās, especially the minor ones, have received accretions of matter from time to time, just like the Prātiśākhyas which they presuppose. A few of them betray the influence of the Prakrits too. Neither the locale nor the age of the Śikṣās can thus be determined with certainty for lack of internal evidence and the corruption of the texts.

Not many Śikṣās of the *Ṛg-Veda* are known. The *Svara-vyañjana Śikṣā,* the only important one, quotes from, and follows the, terminology of the *Ṛk Prātiśākhya* and is post-Pāṇinian. The *Samāna Śikṣā* is just a catalogue of the elisions of the *visarga* in the *Ṛg-Veda.*

The *Yājñavalkya Śikṣā*, most complete among the Śikṣas of the *White Yajur-Veda,* cites Yājñavalkya as an authority and was probably composed not by him, but by a more recent author (*c.* fifth to tenth century A.D.). Other fairly complete Śikṣās are the *Pārāśarī* and the *Amoghānandinī*. The *Vāsiṣṭhī*, different from its namesake which belongs to the *Black Yajur-Veda,* is but loosely called a Śikṣā being a selection from the *Sarvānukramaṇī.* The *Varṇaratnadīpikā* is evidently a modern work.

Among the Śikṣās of the *Black Yajur-Veda,* that of the Cārāyaṇīya school is a late work, as it treats of classical metres, while those of the Taittirīya school have advanced the study of phonetics considerably with their penetrating observations on quantity and accent, and were presumably composed in South India, the acknowledged home of Vedic studies in the medieval period. The *Vaidikābharaṇa* by Gārgya Gopāla Yajvan (fourteenth-fifteenth century A.D.), is an extremely valuable work on the Śikṣās in general and the Taittirīya Śikṣās in particular, because it not only quotes from many of the latter that are extant, but also others yet to be discovered.

The *Nārada Śikṣā* of the *Sāma-Veda* is one of the oldest and most profound Śikṣās treating principally of the accents of the *Sāma-Veda* in their relation to musical notes. According to it, there are three *grāmas* (musical gamuts), the *ṣaḍja* and the *madhyama* current on earth and the *gāndhāra* existing only in heaven. The *Nāṭya-śāstra* of Bharata (fifth century A.D.) employs just those terms for *mūrchanās* (modulations) attri-

buted to Nārada in the *Saṅgīta-ratnākara* (*c.* thirteenth century). The core at least of this Śikṣā, then, may well be earlier than fifth century A.D. The *Lomaśī Śikṣā* makes general but pithy observations on doubling. The *Gautamī Śikṣā* exhibits a deep insight into doubling and consonant-groups.

The *Māṇḍūkī*, the Śikṣā of the *Atharva-Veda*, quotes freely from that Veda, but it treats of accent common to all the Vedas, especially the *Sāma-Veda*. It is probably contemporary with, or posterior to, the *Yājñavalkya Śikṣā*, as it contains much material common to it and other Śikṣās of the *White Yajur-Veda*.

PHONETIC OBSERVATIONS IN THE VEDĀNGA LITERATURE

When the Prātiśākhyas and Pāṇini deal with phonology and Pāṇini treats of morphology, their observations are based on the linguistic phenomena of a living language used by the cultured and educated classes for conversation and literature. The picture of the pronunciation of the Sanskrit language they present is corroborated by its phonetic structure and *sandhi* rules, the evidence of the inscriptions, parallel phenomena in the living dialects, and the principles of linguistics. The observations of the Indian phoneticians in general are, on the whole, sound and realistic, and the linguistic facts of the primitive Indo-Aryan noted by them provide a surer basis for modern studies of Indo-Aryan linguistics than the transcriptions of ancient scribes on which the philologist usually has to rely.

Contributions by Indian phoneticians to linguistics are: (i) The rules on syllabification which are important, because variation in the affinity of one sound for another is a fundamental predisposing factor in linguistic change. Very striking are the minute details regarding *abhinidhāna* (incomplete articulation), the 'pivot' of the Indian theory of syllabification, chiefly responsible for profound changes in the consonant-system of primitive Indo-Aryan. (ii) The noting of pronunciation of *y* and *v* in different positions. (iii) The nasalization of finals, as noticed by authors from Śākalya downwards, is a striking fact in the living languages. In pre-classical and classical Sanskrit, the consonantal element of the *anusvāra* was more predominant, but later the vocalic element became more prominent. When *anusvāra* arose before a fricative, it was a case of *abhinidhāna*. (iv) Quantity is described in a remarkably accurate manner, and the various views noted on quantity are on the whole sound. (v) The insertion of a plosive in the group-fricative + nasal consonant (prescribed by the *Taittirīya Prātiśākhya*) will explain modern Indian forms like 'Viṭṭhal' for Viṣṇu through Viṣṭṇu (compare the modern Bengali: Biṣṭu). (vi) The divergent treatment of Sanskrit plosive + nasal consonant is explained by the observation on the *yamas*. That, in some dialects, there existed actually a tendency for strong

nasality is illustrated by the Pali *paññā* for Sanskrit *prajñā*, which led to the view that the *yamas* belonged to the preceding syllable. Similarly, the partial nasalization of *h* in *brahma* permitted by the *Ātharvaṇa Prātiśākhya* and the prohibition of the nasalization of fricatives in the Śikṣās seem, each of them, to be based on the observation of different contemporary phenomena among the dialects. (vii) The number of vowels as given by the various Indian authorities is as follows: 13 in the *Ṛk* and *Ātharvaṇa Prātiśākhyas*; 16 in the *Taittirīya Prātiśākhya*; 22 in the *Pāṇinīya Śikṣā*; and 23 in the *Vājasaneyi Prātiśākhya* and the *Ṛktantra-vyākaraṇa*. The variations are due to the fact, according to Ghosh,[12] that the *Ṛk* and *Ātharvaṇa Prātiśākhyas* omit *pluta* vowels and so does the *Taittirīya Prātiśākhya*, in the case of some vowels. (viii) The different organs of pronunciation and the sounds produced by them were carefully noted by Indian authorities. For example: (a) The Prātiśākhyas all state that the place of origin of '*r*', which according to them is alveolar or dental, is the teeth or the teeth-ridge. The *Pāṇinīya Śikṣā*, however, holds it to be cerebral. (b) Candragomin is the one ancient Indian author who describes the prominent part played by the human tongue in the pronunciation of sounds. Particular sounds are even assigned by him to specific parts of the tongue. Thus the tip of the tongue produces the dentals; the blade, the cerebrals; and the middle of the tongue the palatals. This very assignment is given by modern phoneticians. Other ancient Indian authorities only mention the places of pronunciation, called '*sthāna*' by Pāṇini, such as the lips, teeth, etc. But these are only passive agents, the active one being the tongue.

A few of the specific contributions of the Śikṣās are: (i) Interesting details regarding the ideal conditions for correct pronunciation are found in the *Yājñavalkya* and *Nārada Śikṣās*, such as sound health, calm temperament, absence of nervousness, and good teeth and lips. (ii) The relationship of the vowel and the consonant is analysed in detail. (iii) They make the first unambiguous statement that the nature of the Vedic accent was musical and that the later seven musical notes, *ṣaḍja* etc., were evolved from the three Vedic accents, *udātta* etc. Their remarks on the relation of accent to quantity are interesting. (iv) The observation by some Śikṣās that *svarabhakti* becomes an independent syllable after the *svarita* accent should stimulate research into those undiscovered dialects in which the phenomenon may have occurred. (v) Although the *Taittirīya Prātiśākhya* (I.34) speaks of the *anusvāra* as being only short, the Śikṣās state that it was long after a short vowel, and short after a long vowel. This will explain why some modern Indian vernaculars like Nepali and Punjabi have a long vowel

[12] Manmohan Ghosh, *The Pāṇinīya Śikṣā* (Calcutta, 1938).

without the *anusvāra*, e.g. *mās* for *māṁsa*, and have preserved the *anusvāra* after a short vowel, e.g. *vañjh* for *vaṁśa*. (vi) The Śikṣās carried further the investigations into doubling, incomplete articulation (*abhinidhāna*), and consonant-groups. For example, the *Cārāyaṇīya Śikṣā* states that final consonants in *sandhi* are to be doubled. This is correct with reference to pronunciation in Sanskrit which was in a sense academic, but in another sense a living language current among certain educated circles. Certain Prakrit dialects show the doubling of semi-final consonants, i.e. pre-suffixal finals or finals of prefixes. For example, for Sanskrit *utsava*, we have *ucchava* in Māgadhī and Śaurasenī side by side with *ussava* in Ardha-Māgadhī. Similarly, the remarks of the Śikṣās on the doubling of *s* and *h* may have occurred in some contemporary dialects.

II. NIRUKTA (ETYMOLOGY)

Nirukta is represented, according to tradition, by a single work, the *Nirukta* of Yāska, which itself states, 'Without this (science), there can be no understanding of the (Vedic) *mantras*' (I.15). However, it is a commentary on an older list of Vedic words, called the *Nighaṇṭu* or the *Naighaṇṭuka*, to each of which one or more illustrative Vedic passages ought to be understood as attached. The lists *and* the commentary are both, as constituting one work, ascribed loosely to Yāska, either because he preserved them together, or because the word-lists were studied in his particular Vedic school, or because they existed in his family. Sköld believes that Yāska was the author, or rather the collector, of the *Nirukta*, in the sense that it is a commentary on the *Nighaṇṭu*.

PRE-NIRUKTA ETYMOLOGICAL MATERIAL

Yāska himself mentions many earlier *niruktakāras* like Śākapūṇi. Earlier still, the Saṁhitās, Brāhmaṇas, Āraṇyakas, and Upaniṣads offer as many as about 600 etymologized words, through etymologies proper, synonymous expressions, explanation of one Vedic word by another, and brief annotations of whole verses and hymns. This etymologizing is sometimes done by implication as in *tvaṣṭā takṣat vajram* (*Ṛ.V.*, X.61.6). Yāska's borrowing from this earlier material is quite evident, though he probably was the first to formulate general principles of etymology. A large number of these etymological equations are due to folk etymology and priestly speculation, but some of them turn out to be surprisingly scientific from the modern linguistic point of view. For example, the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (IV.2.2) has: *'Indho ha vai nāmaiṣaḥ . . . ; etam indhaṁ santam Indra ity-ācakṣate.'* The identification here of the two words *'indha'*

and *'indra'* perhaps unconsciously presumes the knowledge of the linguistic law that the presence of an *'r'* in a consonant-cluster has often resulted in an aspiration.

The desire to glorify the sacrifice often dictated the necessity of explaining through a derivation, somehow brought into relation with a myth or legend, the various names of the sacrifice, the materials employed in it, and the priests, gods, and hostile demons associated with it. Curiously, some of the myths and legends do give the clue to the right derivation of the words, and must have been specially designed to make the etymological process less dry to the ritual-minded priests for whom they were primarily intended. The Saṁhitās of the *Black* and *White Yajur-Veda* are virtually liturgical Saṁhitās and therefore constitute a still earlier and important source of etymological equations. The *Taittirīya* and *Maitrāyaṇī Saṁhitās* contain the largest number of Ṛg-Vedic words etymologized. Among the Brāhmaṇas, the *Śatapatha* and the *Aitareya*, and among the Āraṇyakas, the *Āitareya* are notable in this respect. Among the Upaniṣads, only the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and *Chāndogya* take now and then to etymologizing.

On the basis of the etymological principles formulated by Yāska, and accepted by modern scholars, these etymologies may be classified thus: (1) Etymologies rendered probable both by the phonetic and semantic history of the word. This principle stresses the value of both sound and sense. (2) Those based primarily on the semantic evolution of a word. Some of the etymological equations exhibit a semantic change, often based on similarities and giving rise to metaphor and transference, of which the latter assumes diverse forms or tendencies. For example, the Ṛg-Vedic word *'asura'* (Zend: *'ahura'*), meaning 'a god', exhibits a pejorative tendency in the post-Ṛg-Vedic period, being used in an antithetical sense through metanalysis. This principle gives prime importance to sense only. (3) Those based primarily on phonetic similarity. For example, some exhibit a phonetic change like metathesis and the dropping of letters in various positions. This last type often deteriorates into folk-etymology which originates from a perverted popular reconstruction of the phonetic make-up of a word.

FOLK-ETYMOLOGY IN THE NIRUKTA AND PRE-NIRUKTA LITERATURE

A definition of 'Nirukta' in the *Śabda-kalpa-druma* states that a Nirukta contains the doctrine of the fivefold phenomena occurring in words, namely, the addition, transposition, modification, and omission of letters, and the use of one particular meaning of a root (*Varṇāgamo varṇaviparyayaśca, dvau cāparau varṇavikāranāśau ; dhātostadarthātiśayena yogaḥ, taducyate pañcavidhaṁ niruktam*).

Etymological equations based on the semantic identification of phonetically similar words (e.g. *aṅgāra = aṅgiras* ; *puriśaya = puruṣa* ; etc.) illustrate a tendency inherent in folk-etymology, whereby association by sound may affect the meaning, just as association by sense may bring about changes in the form of words. When two words have the same form, the meaning of the unfamiliar one is assimilated to that of the familiar word. If they have not an identical but a similar form, the less known word assimilates itself phonetically to the better known word. The grouping of words according to their phonemes plays a great part in folk-etymology. The mind seeks to establish relations between the external form of words which are sometimes inversions as regards their meaning and contrary to common sense. It is interesting to note that in Europe, too, the learned etymology of medieval writers, whereby they resolved an unfamiliar word into elements that may yield a possible interpretation of its meaning, the playing with etymology in metaphysical fashion on the part of the Greeks and Romans, and the mistaken ideas of the origin of words in the mind of the uneducated, have all resulted in Brāhmaṇa-like etymologies in European languages. Anecdotal etymologies, which form an important part of folk-etymology, are copious in Brāhmaṇa literature. Thus the etymologies of *agni*, *aśva*, *udumbara*, *vidyut*, *pṛthivī*, etc. are connected with the legend of Prajāpati ; those of *aṣāḍhā*, *aparājitā*, etc., with the legend of the *deva-asura* contest ; and those of *puṣkara* and *śakvarī* with the Indra-Vṛtra fight in the *Śatapatha*, *Taittirīya*, *Aitareya*, *Kauṣītaki*, and other Brāhmaṇas. The agreeably surprising feature of these attempts at etymologizing is that some of them do give a clue to the right derivation, as for example, *pṛthivī* from √*prath* ; *śakvarī* from √*sak* ; and *aṣāḍhā* from √*sah*.

DOUBLETS, HOMONYMS, AND METATHESIS

Doublets and homonyms play an important part in the etymological equations of Vedic literature. The phenomenon by which the same root appears under a double form and sense is called dismorphism. A few examples are: *aṅgāra-aṅgiras* (*Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, III.34), from √*aṅg* ; *aśmā-aśru* (*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, VI.1.2.3), from √*aś* ; and *lakṣma-lakṣmī* (*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, VIII.4.4.11), from √*laks*. Myths often form the vehicle of some of these doublets. That the Vedic equations imply a real grasp of etymological principles is seen from their tracing of the correct radical element in these doublets.

A word having the same pronunciation as another, but differing from it in origin and meaning, is a homonym. A few examples of Vedic homonyms are: (1) *iṣṭi* (sacrifice) is to be traced to √*yaj*, 'to worship', but *iṣṭi* (desire, search) is from √*iṣ*, 'to seek, to desire', etc. ; (2) *védaḥ*, 'finding' and

védaḥ, 'knowledge'; and (3) *pātṛ*, 'protector' and *pātṛ*, 'drinker'. Sometimes, as in the first example cited above, accent helps to distinguish one from the other of a pair of homonyms. Homonyms are, comparatively speaking, few in Sanskrit.

Sometimes there is the transposition of two sounds or the interchange of two phonemes within a word. Thus *prayāja*=*prajayā* and *yajña*=*yañja* (*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, I.5.3.3; III 9.4.23); *kaśyapa*=*paśyaka* (*Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*, I.8.7). Yāska refers to this phenomenon in II.2: *athāpi ādyanta-viparyayo bhavati*. According to Yāska, forms like *stoka*, *rajju*, and *sikatā* are formed through metathesis from the roots *scut*, *sṛj*, and *kas*, respectively.

THE NIGHAṆṬU OR THE NAIGHAṆṬUKA

The *Naighaṇṭuka* consists of five chapters. In the first three, synonymous words are merely grouped together and the common meaning is indicated at the end of each para with a better-known word. The fourth chapter consists of words, each considered by itself. Each of these words has more than one meaning or is obscure. The fifth chapter contains a list of well-known deity-names—the word 'deity' being used in the very wide sense of 'the topic or subject of a hymn' in the *Ṛg-Veda*. The *Nirukta* (VII.13) suggests that the Nighaṇṭu was not the only list of its kind. Even the extant *Nighaṇṭu* appears to be the work not of a single author but of generations of scholars.

YĀSKA'S NIRUKTA

The *Nirukta* consists of twelve chapters[13] divided into two parts, each containing a sextet (*ṣaṭka*) of chapters. The 'Pūrva-ṣaṭka' (first sextet) is further subdivided into two divisions: (i) 'Naighaṇṭuka-kāṇḍa', which comments on the first three chapters of the *Nighaṇṭu* in three corresponding chapters, and (ii) 'Naigama-kāṇḍa', which also consists of three chapters, and comments on the fourth chapter of the *Nighaṇṭu*. The 'Uttara-ṣaṭka' (second sextet) comments on the fifth or last chapter of the *Nighaṇṭu*, and is called the 'Daivata-kāṇḍa'. Though the two *ṣaṭkas* appear to have been originally two separate works, the blending of the two parts must have taken place very early, even before the *Bṛhad-devatā*, which quotes both the *ṣaṭkas*. Even in its present interpolated condition, the *Nirukta* betrays a unifying hand, and that hand was the hand of Yāska.

The Vedic Saṁhitā quotations are, as a rule, accented in the *Nirukta*. So unaccented citations may be reasonably suspected as later interpolations.

[13] The edition published by the Nirṇayasāgar Press, Bombay (1930), contains a thirteenth chapter consisting of 13 sections as *pariśiṣṭa* (appendix). The Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute edition (1942) has sections 14-50 in addition, which are either treated as part of the thirteenth chapter or as a separate fourteenth chapter.

This serves as a guiding principle in the investigation which yields the following conclusions:

(a) The influence of the *Ṛg-Veda* is the most dominant. Probably, the original aim of the *Nirukta*, in pursuance of *Nighaṇṭu* trends, was to examine certain Ṛg-Vedic *nigamas* only.

(b) There are clear traces of the influence of the old *yajus*, though no particular school of it can be said to have influenced the oldest form of the *Nirukta*. This is probably to be attributed to Yāska and his successors. The influence of the Kāṇva recension of the *Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā* seems to have been brought to bear on the *Nirukta* at a late stage, a supposition that will satisfactorily account for the phonological peculiarity that '*l*' appears instead of '*ḷ*' of the Ṛg-Vedic *nigama*, when the word is repeated in the text of the *Nirukta* for comment, although '*ḷ*' is faithfully reproduced in the accented citation proper. According to Sköld, sometime or other, the Kāṇva school must have substituted '*l*' and '*lh*' in positions where the *Ṛg-Veda* has '*ḷ*' and '*ḷh*', respectively, and this has been transmitted to the *Nirukta*.

(c) No influence whatever from either the *Sāma-Veda* or the *Atharva-Veda* can be traced in the original (accented) *nigamas*.

THE ETYMOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES OF YĀSKA

The etymological theories of Yāska as presented at the beginning of the second chapter of the *Nirukta* testify to the deep insight into, and penetrating judgement on, grammatical matters, and also reveal the linguistic mistakes of the old Brāhmaṇical schools. One of the most vital and fundamental problems of etymology is: Are all nouns derived from verbal roots? All the etymologists, excepting Gārgya, answer this question in the affirmative, whereas all the grammarians, excepting Śākaṭāyana, oppose this view. The pros and cons of this question are discussed by Yāska with such sobriety that his presentation or explanation cannot be improved upon even today. We have to admit with him that the derivative character of all nouns is a matter of belief, rather than of proof. While several objects that share in the same predicate should all receive the same name, yet generic words (homonyms) are found based on one predicate rather than another: e.g. anyone who takes to a road—*adhvānam aśnuvīta*—should be called *aśva*, but it is only a horse that is called so. Similarly, when the same object possesses various predicates—e.g. a pillar (*sthūṇā*) stands upright, rests in a hole, and joins a beam—, it should be called by different names; and yet only one appellative, out of many, becomes fixed as the proper name of an object. The only explanation is, as Yāska says, that it is so by itself

(*svabhāvataḥ*), through the influence of individuals, poets, or lawgivers. In other words, it is convention that avoids the confusion that would result if all people or objects associated with the same action were to receive the same designation, or if a thing associated with more than one action were to receive several corresponding designations.[14]

The general and particular rules laid down for the derivation of words may now be briefly stated. General rules: (i) All nominal forms are derived from roots. (ii) In deriving words, due attention must be paid to accent, grammatical formation, and meaning, the last being the most important aspect.

The particular rules are: (i) A nominal form is to be derived from a root which has the sense of that act which solely belongs to the thing denoted by the noun, in such a way that its accent and formation are based on rules of grammar, e.g. *kāraka* from √*kṛ*. (ii) When the current meaning of a word does not agree with the meaning of the root apparent in it, and when its nominal form cannot be developed from the root by ordinary rules of grammar, one should take one's stand on the meaning only and explain the word through its resemblance to the verbal or nominal form of a root that has the meaning of it, e.g. *hasta* (a hand) should be derived not from √*has*, 'to laugh', apparent in it, but from √*han*, 'to strike', because the hand is quick at striking. (iii) When there is no resemblance between a word and any form of a root that has its meaning, the resemblance or community of even a (single) syllable or letter (vowel or consonant) should be the basis of etymology (as in the case of the Vedic word '*agni*'). (iv) Even inflected case-forms may be adjusted to the meaning (*yathārthaṁ vibhaktīḥ saṁnamayet*). (v) Similarly, *taddhita* derivatives and compounds (whether of one or more members) should be analysed into their component elements and the component elements explained.

The hymns of the *Ṛg-Veda* had become unintelligible as early as the time of even the later Saṁhitās, owing to a break in the exegetical tradition. Yāska therefore, in explaining an obscure Vedic word, had to rely on imagination more or less to suggest a number of roots, which could afford a clue to the proper understanding of its sense. Meaning or *artha* being thus the principal element to which other elements were subordinate, the importance of the *Nirukta* for semasiology, which represents the psychological aspect of language, cannot be over-estimated. Another aim of the

[14] The following remarks of Breal sound like an echo of the observations of Yāska and other Indian etymologists: 'Language designates things in an incomplete and inaccurate manner. It is impossible for language to introduce into the world all the ideas which an object or entity existing in nature awakens in the mind. Language is therefore compelled to choose out of the ideas. It can choose *one* only. It thus creates a name which is not long in becoming a mere *sign*' (*Semantics*, pp. 171-72).

Nirukta was to explain Vedic theology to the Brāhmaṇical schools. When Yāska therefore derived a Vedic word from a verbal root by way of explaining it, the thing, person, or animal denoted by the word came (in his eyes) to share in the action of the verb. The word not only represented the thing; it was also the thing itself. The modern word 'etymology' hardly does justice to this notion of '*nirvacana*'. The whole background was theological, because theology in India, more than in any other country, was the mother of all sciences. We should therefore rather be agreeably surprised at the large number of good and true etymologies in the *Nirukta* than be disappointed at the many etymologies which look absurd to us but were self-evident to Yāska.

III. VYĀKARAṆA (GRAMMAR)

In the case of the Vedāṅga *vyākaraṇa*, as in the case of the other Vedāṅgas, it is crystal clear that the traditional claim that it is represented by the grammar of Pāṇini is to be understood only in the sense that grammatical studies culminated in, and were certainly not inaugurated by, the almost perfect work of Pāṇini. Nay, Pāṇini himself mentions no fewer than sixty-four predecessors, whose works were superseded, and virtually obliterated, by his own monumental work.

PRE-PĀṆINIAN GRAMMATICAL LITERATURE

Language was an object of wonder and meditation to the Vedic *ṛṣis*. Soma and Viśvakarman are described as lords of speech in the *Ṛg-Veda*, which celebrates Vāc (personified speech) as a goddess in one hymn (X.125 ; cf. X.71 also). Some stanzas of the *Ṛg-Veda* are capable of being given a grammatical explanation. Thus, expressions like '*catvāri śṛṅgā*' and '*sapta sindhavaḥ*' have been interpreted by Patañjali in terms of the four parts of speech and the seven cases. The *Taittirīya Saṁhitā* mentions Indra as having analysed (and expounded) speech to the gods.

There are many speculations on letters, syllables, and words in the Brāhmaṇas as also numerous terms like *akṣara, varṇa, vṛṣan* (masculine), *vacana,* and *vibhakti,* which Pāṇini uses without definition, marking a definite advance of grammatical knowledge. In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (XIII.5.1.18), we meet with names for singular and plural.

The Āraṇyakas and Upaniṣads not only mention technical grammatical terms for certain groups of letters, but contain details about the phonetic treatment of the Vedic texts. In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad,* for example, we find a classification of letters and technical terms such as *svara* (vowels), *sparśa* (consonants), and *uṣman* (sibilants). The names of certain theological

grammarians such as Śākalya and Māṇḍūkeya are mentioned for the first time in this period.

PADA-PĀṬHA

'*Vyākaraṇa*' (lit. 'analysis') is the most appropriate name for 'grammar' which pursues the study of linguistic phenomena through the method of 'analysis'. From this point of view, the next landmark in the development of grammar may be said to have been reached when the Saṁhitā texts of the Vedas were reduced to the *pada-pāṭha,* wherein each word is exhibited separately in its individual grammatical form, followed, when necessary, by word-signs like '*iti*' and also by symbols like the *avagraha* etc. to distinguish case-terminations, to analyse compounds, and to mark out a few special cases of accentuation. The *pada-pāṭhas* thus show that their authors had not only made investigations as to pronunciation and *sandhi* rules, but also knew a good deal about the grammatical analysis of words, as they distinguish the four parts of speech—noun, verb, preposition, and particle—and separate the parts of compounds and the prefixes of verbs as well as certain suffixes and case-terminations of nouns. In their substance, the *Taittirīya, Vājasaneyi,* and *Atharva Prātiśākhyas* are older than Pāṇini and the *Ṛg-Veda Prātiśākhya,* the oldest of all, quotes Yāska.

Yāska distinguishes a Northern and an Eastern school of grammarians and mentions nearly twenty predecessors such as Śākaṭāyana, Gārgya, and Śākalya. He distinguishes between the two elements of a word: (i) the *semanteme* (popularly called the 'root'), containing its general meaning, and (ii) the *morpheme* (the inflection, or the suffixes and affixes), which gives definite form to the general meaning. The theory of the verbal origin of nouns, so vital to the structure of grammatical science, which finds elaborate and profound discussion in the *Nirukta,* may be said to be the foundation of the whole system of Pāṇini. Yāska states that there are four kinds of parts of speech—*nāman* (noun), *ākhyāta* (verb), *upasarga* (preposition), and *nipāta* (particle)—terms used later by Pāṇini. The verb, he explains, is primarily concerned with '*being*', and nouns with '*beings*'. The difference is established, as in Aristotle, by ascribing a temporal character to the verb and denying it to the noun. The name for a pronoun '*sarva-nāman*' also occurs in the *Nirukta* (VII.2).

THE PRĀTIŚĀKHYAS AND GRAMMAR

The Prātiśākhyas do not refer to grammar, properly so-called, but presuppose a long-continued study of grammatical subjects quoting as they do (e.g. Śaunaka) the differing opinions of earlier grammarians like the Śākalas. They not only give the fourfold classification of the parts of speech

like nouns, verbs, prepositions, and particles, but also another division of a purely grammatical nature. For instance, *Kātyāyanīya Prātiśākhya* (IV.170) says: 'Language consists of verbs (*ākhyāta*) with their conjugational terminations, nouns (*nāman*) derived from verbs by means of *kṛt* suffixes, nouns derived from nouns by means of *taddhita* suffixes, and four kinds of compounds.' They tell us that there are twenty prepositions, which have a meaning if joined with nouns or verbs. Words outside of nouns (expressing 'a being'), verbs (which mark 'being'), and prepositions are particles, some of which have a sense, the others being expletives. The name for a case, '*vibhakti*', is found in the Prātiśākhyas, which mention the number of cases also as seven. Only the distinction of genders seems to have been passed over in the Prātiśākhyas, and appears first in Pāṇini. The Prātiśākhyas are not called *vyākaraṇas*, because they provide the basis only for the phonetic system of Pāṇini, but not for his strictly grammatical theories. As such, the extreme view of the *Vaidikābharaṇa* that the grammatical element is the basic element and predominates over the phonetic element in the Prātiśākhyas is as unacceptable as the other extreme view of Goldstücker that the Prātiśākhyas were divorced from grammar. He wrongly assumed that tradition dissociated grammatical topics completely from the Prātiśākhyas.

GRAMMARIANS PRECEDING PĀṆINI

Of the sixty-four grammarians, referred to as his predecessors by Pāṇini, the important ones are Āpiśali and Kāśakṛtsna, who are credited with the founding of grammatical schools and from whom a few passages are quoted by Kaiyaṭa, a later writer,[16] and Gārgya, Kāśyapa, Gālava, Bhāradvāja, Śākaṭāyana, Śākalya, Cākravarmaṇa, Senaka, and Sphoṭāyana as well as those referred to under the collective appellation of Eastern and Northern grammarians. As regards the Aindra school of grammarians, the claim of its priority to Pāṇini is advanced by a tradition mentioned by the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen-Tsang and the Tibetan Tāranātha. Though the *paribhāṣā* and technique of the Aindra school *look* more primitive than those of Pāṇini, the *name* and *extant doctrines* of the school, at any rate, must be set down as later, since no important work of the Pāṇinian school mentions the name 'Aindra'.

TECHNICAL TERMS PRESUPPOSED BY PĀṆINI

From a rule of Pāṇini (I.2.53), which lays down the principle that a matter which has the authority of a *saṁjñā* ('conventional' or 'settled' term) is

[16] Belvalkar in his *Systems of Sanskrit Grammar* mentions that extracts from the works of these authors appear in the writings of later grammarians.

not taught or defined by him, and the commentary of Patañjali thereon, we can safely infer that the terms *pratyaya, dhātu, upasarga, vṛddhi, avyaya, samāsa, tatpuruṣa, bahuvrīhi, avyayībhāva, kṛt,* and *taddhita* were of current use in his time. The names of the cases from *prathamā* to *saptamī* were used by the Eastern grammarians before Pāṇini. There are other terms which he defines not because he invented them, but because he employs them in a special sense, viz. *dvandva, karmadhāraya, anunāsika, savarṇa, pragṛhya, lopa, hrasva, dīrgha, pluta, udātta, anudātta, svarita, apṛkta,* and *upasarjana.* As regards purely grammatical symbols which are not *saṁjñās,* we cannot say definitely that he invented them, because some of them at least were, according to Patañjali, already known to Pāṇini, e.g. *ti, ghu,* and *bha.*

THE UṆĀDI-SŪTRAS AND PHIṬ-SŪTRAS

As regards the *Uṇādi-Sūtras,* the tradition valid among grammarians like Patañjali (*Śakaṭasya tokam*) attributes them to Śākaṭāyana, a predecessor of Pāṇini. Pāṇini himself, in his *sūtra* '*uṇādayo bahulam*' (III.3.1), seems to recognize them as authoritative for the most part (not everywhere). Max Müller[16] holds that these Sūtras, at least in their original collection, if not in their present enlarged form, were presupposed by Pāṇini. Goldstücker,[17] however, after a long discussion, arrives at the following conclusions: The *Uṇādi-Sūtras,* which use just those terms which are defined by Pāṇini and in exactly the same sense in which he uses them, were, in their existing collection, composed later than Pāṇini. Ujjvaladatta and Bhaṭṭojī Dīkṣita hold the same view. The *Rūpamālā* of Vimala ascribes them to Vararuci (a name of Kātyāyana, who completed the work of Pāṇini). As regards the list of affixes, *uṇādayaḥ,* which Pāṇini quotes twice, the explanation is as follows: All the *uṇādi* affixes have *anubandhas* which are the same and have the same grammatical effect as those used by Pāṇini. These *anubandhas* could not have preceded him, because Patañjali points out that *anubandhas* of former grammarians have no *anubandha* effect in Pāṇini; so Pāṇini himself must be the author of the core of the *uṇādi* list mentioned by him in his work. It may be stated, in support of Goldstücker's theory, that Indian pundits like Mm. Vasudeva Shastri Abhyankar of Poona look upon them as an *adjunct* to Pāṇini's grammar.

As regards the claim of priority for the *Phiṭ-Sūtras* of Śāntana advanced by Müller,[18] Goldstücker rejects it on the following grounds: (i) Where these Sūtras and Pāṇini cover the same ground, the latter's rules are more

[16] *A History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature* (The Panini Office, Allahabad, 1912), p. 77.
[17] *Pāṇini: His Place in Sanskrit Literature,* pp. 158-70.
[18] *A History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature,* p. 79.

incomplete in substance. This would be inconceivable if the *Phiṭ-Sūtras* preceded Pāṇini. (ii) Some rules of Śāntana complete and criticize Pāṇini. (iii) If it be claimed that the *Phiṭ-Sūtras* treat of accent only, it may be pointed out that accent was not confined to the Vedic language only. No word could be pronounced without an accent. Besides, the great bulk of words treated of in the *Phiṭ-Sūtras* belong, with equal right, to the classical language. (iv) Finally, Nāgojibhaṭṭa makes the statement that the *Phiṭ-Sūtras*, considered in reference to Pāṇini, are simply modern and recent.

IV. CHANDAS (METRICS)

Piṅgala's *Chandaḥ-Sūtra* treats mainly of post-Vedic (classical) prosody, though it has a section on Vedic metres and many others which are obsolete now. Though presumed to be a Vedic text devoted to Vedic metres in general, it deals with Prakrit as well as Sanskrit metres in the manner of Kātyāyana Vararuci, who composed the *vārttikas* on Pāṇini as well as a Prakrit grammar. Piṅgala's treatment of metres is similar to that of the *Agni Purāṇa* (chapters 328-34). It holds the position of a standard work on classical prosody. Its code of mnemonics, namely, *ya-ma-tā-rā-ja-bhā-na-sa-la-gam*, for the eight *gaṇas* of three syllables each and the long and short sound measures, being well known, has survived other similar attempts.

PRE-PIṄGALA CHANDAS MATERIAL

The *Ṛg-Veda* being a metrical composition, the *ṛṣis* were undoubtedly familiar with the rules and art of metrical expression. If the *ṛc* was the *yoni* (womb), out of which originated the *sāman* (tune or melody), this could happen only if the disposition of letters in it yielded sounds conducive to the harmony of the ear. The Ṛg-Vedic bards often constructed fresh metrical schemes, comparing, as they do, their originality and skill to those displayed in the construction of a chariot.[19]

In the *Ṛg-Veda* (X.14.16 ; X.130.4-5), we meet with several terms which later became well known technical designations of metres. *Gāyatrī* is said to be born of Agni, *uṣṇih* of Savitṛ, *anuṣṭubh* of Soma, *bṛhatī* of Bṛhaspati, and *virāṭ* of Mitrāvaruṇa. Indra—the god praised most often—invented the *triṣṭubh*, the metre employed most often. The Viśvedevas (All-gods) created the *jagatī*. The *śakvarī* is mentioned when we are told that the Vasiṣṭhas strengthened Indra by loudly chanting in that metre.

A hymn in the eighth *kāṇḍa* of the *Atharva-Veda* gives the number of syllables in these seven chief metres of Vedic poetry as increasing by four

[19] Arnold, *Vedic Metre*, p. 19.

successively, i.e. from 24 in the *gāyatrī* to 48 in the *jagatī*. These seven metres are often mentioned with names in the other Saṁhitās.[20]

Fascinated by the charming rhythm of the metres, the authors of the Brāhmaṇas ingeniously show that their harmony is in some mystical and mysterious fashion the fundamental cause of the harmony of the world. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (VIII.1.1-2) tells us that metres, like other beings, were created by Prajāpati. In III.9.4.10, it mentions Gāyatrī as a mystical name of Agni who carries off the *soma*. Gāyatrī, in the form of a bird, fetches the *soma* from heaven.

In the Brāhmaṇa and Upaniṣad speculations on the mystical significance of metres, numbers play a great part. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (V.15) says: 'The words *bhūmi*, *antarikṣa*, and *dyu* (to be pronounced as *di-u*) make up 8 syllables; a *gāyatrī pāda* (foot) consists of 8 syllables; therefore he who knows the *gāyatrī* gains the three worlds.'

In the *Śāṅkhāyana Śrauta-Sūtra* (VII.27), inquiries into the beginning of the science of metrics lead to the formulation of the principles of versification. In the *Vāsiṣṭha Dharma-śāstra* (XIII.3 and elsewhere) the metres are deified enough to have sacrifices offered to them. In the *Śākala Prātiśākhya* of Śaunaka, the last three *paṭalas* (chapters) are on metres.

The *Nidāna-Sūtra* of the *Sāma-Veda* discusses the metrical aspect of the various parts of that musical Veda, such as: the *uktha*, *stoma*, and *gāna*. It explains the nature and different names of all the Vedic metres and gives an index to the metres of hymns employed in the *ekāha*, *ahīna*, and *sattra* sacrifices.

Among the five or six extant Anukramaṇīs (Indices) which are attached to the *Ṛg-Veda*, the *Chandonukramaṇī* (of about 300 stanzas in the *anuṣṭubh* and *triṣṭubh* metres) enumerates the metres of the Ṛg-Vedic hymns and states the number of verses in each metre.

The extensive *Sarvānukramaṇī* (General Index) epitomizes, in *sūtra* style, the data of the Anukramaṇīs. It contains some metrical *pādas*, and borrows a number of passages from the *Ārṣānukramaṇī* and the *Bṛhad-devatā*, in their metrical wording, with or without additions. To Kātyāyana is also attributed the Anukramaṇī of the *White Yajur-Veda* in the *Mādhyandina* recension, consisting of five sections, the fifth section of which gives a brief account of the metres occurring in the *White Yajur-Veda*.

VERSIFICATION IN VEDIC LITERATURE

The unit of a Ṛg-Vedic hymn is the stanza or *ṛc*. The hymn generally consists of not less than three and not more than fifteen such units in the

[20] *Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā*, V.2; cf. *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, III.4.1; VIII.5.2.

same metre. A conventional variation is a different metre in the last stanza, to mark the close of the hymn. Some hymns consist of a succession of single stanzas or of groups. A group has either three stanzas in the same simple metre (*gāyatrī* generally) or two stanzas in different metres. This latter strophic type called *pragātha* is found chiefly in the eighth *maṇḍala*. The number of syllables in the common type of stanzas vary from 20 (4 x 5) to 48 (4 x 12).

Historically, the Vedic metres, mainly those of the *Ṛg-Veda*,[21] stand mid-way between the Avestan system[22] and that of classical Sanskrit.

The Avesta has 8-syllable or 11-syllable lines which ignore quantity, but are combined into stanzas which resemble those of the *Ṛg-Veda* in all other aspects. In the *Ṛg-Veda*, the quantity of the initial and final syllables is always indifferent, but rhythmic tendencies determine with varying regularity, the last four or five syllables, the very last syllable being a *syllaba anceps*. The fixed rhythm at the end of the Vedic line is called *vṛtta* (lit. 'turn', from √*vṛt*), which corresponds etymologically to the Latin *versus* (*vert-ere*).

The metrical unit of Vedic prosody, the line or verse called *pāda*, though meaning literally 'a foot', has nothing to do with the 'foot' of the Greek prosody—a breaking up into such small units as the Greek 'feet' being impossible in ancient Indian poetry. The word is used rather in the figurative sense of 'quarter', from the foot of a quadruped, a stanza having usually four lines. A *pāda* ordinarily consists of 8, 11, or 12, and much less commonly 5, syllables. A stanza or *ṛc* is generally formed of three or four lines of the same kind. Rarer types such as the *uṣṇih* and *bṛhatī* are composed of *pādas* of 8 or 12 syllables. Short and long syllables alternate in a *pāda*, more in its latter part called the 'cadence' than in its earlier part called the 'opening'. The rhythm is, in general, an iambic one in nearly all the metres, since they betray a preference for the even syllables being long rather than short. Verses of 11 or 12 syllables are characterized not only by their cadence, but also by a caesura after the fourth or fifth syllable, and consist of three members, the opening, the cadence, and (in between) the break between the caesura and the cadence, while verses of 8 (or 5) syllables have no such metrical pause.

The 8-syllable line usually ends in two iambics, the first four syllables, though not exactly determined, having a tendency to be iambic also. This verse is therefore a very near equivalent of the Greek iambic dimeter. The

[21] The stanzas of the *Ṛg-Veda* are composed in some fifteen metres, only seven of which are really frequent. Three of them, the *triṣṭubh*, the *gāyatrī*, and the *jagatī* are by far the commonest metres, claiming between them about four-fifths of the stanzas in the *Ṛg-Veda* and individually accounting for about two-fifths, one-fourth, and three-twentieths, respectively.

[22] Compare the word '*chandas*' with '*zend*'.

normal scheme of this line is therefore: oooo⏑–⏑⏓ . Three of these lines combine to form the *gāyatrī* metre, and four of them combine to form the *anuṣṭubh* stanza in which the first two and the last two lines are more closely connected. In the *Ṛg-Veda*, the *anuṣṭubh* stanzas number only one-third of the *gāyatrī* ones. This relation is gradually reversed until we reach the post-Vedic stage where the *gāyatrī* has disappeared and the *anuṣṭubh* has become the dominant metre—the classical *śloka*—, the proper metre of epic poetry. Five or six lines of 8 syllables each constitute the very rare metres, *paṅkti* and *mahāpaṅkti*, respectively. The gradual evolution of the epic *śloka* can be traced in the *Ṛg-Veda* itself. In the oldest hymns, all the four verses are the same, i.e. iambic in rhythm. In the later hymns, the tendency to distinguish the first and third lines from the second and fourth, by making the former non-iambic, begins to be evident. Finally, in the latest hymns of the tenth *maṇḍala*, the iambic rhythm disappears altogether from the odd lines. Here, among all the possible combinations of quantity in the last four syllables, the commonest variation, nearly as frequent as the iambic, is ⏑––⏓ , which is the regular ending of the odd lines in the post-Vedic *śloka*.

The *triṣṭubh* stanza consists of four lines of 11 syllables each, which, from the point of view of their metrical scheme, may be called catalectic-*jagatī* lines. Their scheme is oooo‖ooo–⏑–⏓ or ooooo‖oo–⏑–⏓ , according as the caesura comes after the fourth or fifth syllable.

The 12-syllable line (four of such lines constitute the *jagatī* stanza) is probably an extension of the *triṣṭubh* verse by one syllable, which gives the trochaic cadence of the latter an iambic character. The scheme is either oooo‖ooo–⏑–⏑⏓ or ooooo‖oo–⏑–⏑⏓ . These two *pādas* or verses, the *triṣṭubh* and the *jagatī*, being closely allied and having the same cadence, are often found mixed in the same stanza.

The normal scheme of a line or verse of 5 syllables is ⏓–⏑–⏓ . Four such verses divided into two hemistichs give us the rare stanza *dvipadā-virāj*.

Let us conclude with a few apt general observations on Vedic metres in the *Jayadāman*:[23] These Vedic metres are based on the *svara-saṅgīta* or the music of voice-modulation, where the time-element plays no important rôle in the production of the metrical music. . . . The musical difference between a short and long letter was not yet made use of for the sake of music in Vedic metres, a letter, whether short or long, being considered as the metrical unit in the construction of lines. But since short and long letters had to be used in different orders in a line, in actual practice, the

[23] H. D. Velankar, *Jayadāman* (Bombay, 1949), pp. 9-11.

consciousness of this musical difference could not be avoided for long. . . . By the end of the Saṁhitā period, the earlier metrical music, based on the modulation of voice to different pitches and tunes, seems to have been generally given up in preference to the new kind of music based on the alternation of short and long sounds. The older music was taken up for a special treatment and development by the schools of the *Sāma-Veda,* and the growth of the different *rāgas* and *rāgiṇīs* (modes or melodies) in Indian music must surely be traced to their original and early efforts. But the poets in general adapted their compositions to the new music.

V. JYOTIṢA (ASTRONOMY)

The *Vedāṅga Jyotiṣa,* propounding the doctrine as taught by Lagadha, has 36 verses in the Ṛg-Vedic recension and 43 in the Yajur-Vedic one, 30 being common to both. The *Ātharvaṇa Jyotiṣa* of 162 verses dealing with *muhūrta* (a particular division of time), *karaṇa* (an astrological division of day), *yoga* (leading star of a lunar asterism ; a variable division of time), *tithi* (lunar-day), and *vāra* (week-day) falls outside the Vedic period. It is important as it treats also of *jātaka* (astrology), a branch of *jyotiṣa.* It is, however, pre-Siddhānta, as it makes no mention of the twelve *rāśis* (zodiac) borrowed from the Greeks.

The *Vedāṅga Jyotiṣa* helps to determine, for purposes of the sacrifices, the positions of the sun and the moon at the solstices and of the new and full moon in the circle of the 27 *nakṣatras* or star-groups of the zodiac. It gives simple rules and concise formulae for the calculation of *tithis, parvans* (new and full moon days), *viṣuvats* (equinoxial days), etc.

The basis of calculation is the very convenient one of a five-year cycle called a *yuga,* because the solar year is taken to be of 366 days and five of these (1830 days) accommodate 62 full moons and 62 new moons, i.e. 124 complete *parvans,* which, with the addition of two intercalary months (one in the third and the other during the fifth year), turned the cycle from a lunar into a solar one. The cycle commenced with the coming together of the sun, the moon, and the *nakṣatra* Dhaniṣṭhā on the first *tithi* of the bright fortnight of Māgha, at the autumnal solstice (the beginning of *uttarāyaṇa*). The *Vedāṅga Jyotiṣa,* with the zodiac divided into 27 *nakṣatras,* became obsolete, when the Siddhānta calendar, with the zodiac divided into 12 *rāśis,* became popular later.

DATE OF THE WORK

A statement in this Vedāṅga that 'in the beginning of Śraviṣṭhā, the sun and the moon turn towards the north'—a conjunction observed as

occurring in the days of Lagadha—yields by astronomical calculation the very early date of 1200 B.C. for the work, a result somehow explained away by scholars who are sceptical, as the work betrays signs of lateness. But C. V. Vaidya,[24] who points out an earlier position of the *uttarāyaṇa* in the middle of the Dhaniṣṭhā division, argues that the statement cannot be brushed aside as it is accurate and fixes the time of Lagadha, although the present work may be a late one. It is not, however, as late as it is supposed to be for (i) it is not composed in *sūtras*, (ii) it uses older names of *nakṣatras* and words like *gharma* and *rāśi* in their older meanings, and (iii) even some of the older Upaniṣads are composed in verse. This work refers to the custom of naming persons from the *nakṣatras* of their birth, as the Gṛhya-Sūtras do.

EARLIER JYOTIṢA LITERATURE

Several Ṛg-Vedic hymns presuppose a considerable development of sacrificial ceremonies, the regulation whereof required an accurate knowledge of months, seasons, and the year. The primitive calendar was, in fact, coeval with the sacrificial system. 'The *sattras*, which lasted for one year, were nothing but an imitation of the sun's yearly course. They were divided into two distinct parts, each consisting of six months of 30 days each ; in the midst of both was the *viṣuvat*, i.e. equatorial or central day, cutting the whole *sattra* into two halves.'[25] The identification of *saṁvatsara* (year) with the sacrifice in many Brāhmaṇa passages and the etymology of the word '*ṛt-vij*' (=*ṛtu*+*yaj*, 'season-sacrificer') point in the same direction. The meaning of *saṁvatsara* (a period where the seasons dwell, from √*vas*, 'to dwell') shows that the year was equivalent to a complete cycle of seasons. The year was thus solar and at the same time sidereal, but not tropical.

The month was determined and measured by the moon. The close affinity of the names for month and moon indicates a knowledge of lunar chronology. As the name for the moon has cognates in Sanskrit, Greek, and German, and as the root from which it is derived meant originally 'to measure', the moon seems to have been looked upon as the measurer of time even in Indo-European times. The adjustment of the solar year to the lunar year was effected either by adding the intercalary month every two or three years, as *Ṛg-Veda*, I.25.8 shows, or by the insertion of twelve (intercalary) nights at the close of the lunar year, as is suggested by *Ṛg-Veda*, IV.33.7, which tells us that the Ṛbhus (the genii of the seasons) slacken their course and rest with the sun for twelve nights at the end of a year. The latter was, probably, the older device, as the twelve days of preparation

[24] *History of Sanskrit Literature*, I. p. 92.
[25] Dr. Haug quoted by Tilak in his *Orion*.

prescribed before the commencement of the yearly sacrifice shows. The *devayāna* (*Ṛ.V.*, I.72.7 ; X.2.7), equated by the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and *Chāndogya Upaniṣads* to the six months when the sun is towards the north, must have commenced with the vernal equinox. The *Ṛg-Veda*, V.40 refers to an observation by the sage Atri of a total eclipse of the sun and not (as is supposed) an obscuration of the sun by clouds, and in II.3.2, the phases of the moon have not only received proper names, but they are also invoked as deities.

In the latter part of the *Atharva-Veda* (XIX), the lunar mansions are enumerated by names, some of which are different from those in the *Taittirīya Saṁhitā*, the others appearing in a late form. The year-beginning seems to have been shifted from the vernal equinox to the winter solstice at least before the *Taittirīya Saṁhitā*, in which there is a discussion as to whether the month should begin with the new or full moon. In the *Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā* (VII.30 ; XXII.31), the deity of the thirteenth month—the Aṁhasaspati—has an oblation offered to it, along with the deities of the twelve months. Again, *nakṣatradarśa* and *gaṇaka* occur as names for an astronomer (XXX.10, 20). The five-year time-unit called the '*yuga*', accommodating two intercalary months, is mentioned for the first time in the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa*, giving the names of years as *saṁvatsara* etc. with their overlords. The old names of the months derived from the seasons, namely, Madhu, Mādhava, etc., occur in the later Saṁhitās and the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa*, but the new names derived from 12 out of the 27 *nakṣatras* are found in the *Śatapatha, Kauṣītaki*, and *Pañcaviṁśa Brāhmaṇas*. It seems that along with the *tithi*, the *sāvana* (lit. sacrificial day), i.e. natural or civil day, was simultaneously in use, and the *Taittirīya Saṁhitā* (VII.5.7.1) and *Tāṇḍya Brāhmaṇa* (V.13) show how an adjustment of the *sāvana* and lunar months was effected by omitting a day from the former. The number of the *nakṣatras* is put down as 27 in the *Taittirīya Saṁhitā*, but as 28 in the *Atharva-Veda* and the *Maitrāyaṇī Saṁhitā*. Abhijit, which is far away from the zodiac, was included first as marking the approach of the *viṣuvat*, and later dropped, when *viṣuvat* ceased to be the central day owing to the falling back of the seasons. The succession of 27 *nakṣatras*, which all lie not far distant from the ecliptic, were combined into a kind of lunar zodiac, employed for the purpose of estimating the position of the moon for prescribing the time for a sacrificial act.

According to Tilak (*Orion*) and Jacobi, the Kṛttikās (Pleiades) formed the starting point of the *nakṣatra* series which coincided with the vernal equinox in the period of the Brāhmaṇas, because a passage in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* reads: *Kṛttikā ha vai prācyai diśo na cyavante*, which means, according to them, 'the Kṛttikās rose due east'. In the Vedic texts, there are

also traces of an older calendar in which the vernal equinox fell in the Orion (Mṛgaśiras).[26]

In the time of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad,* astronomy (*nakṣatra-vidyā*) seems to have attained the status of a science worthy of study by the Brāhmaṇas. In the *gaṇa-pāṭha* of Pāṇini, the title *jyotiṣa* occurs; and in III.1.143, *graha* (planet) is mentioned as different from *grāha* (crocodile).

In the Gṛhya-Sūtras, it is recorded that on arrival at their new home, the bridegroom points out to the bride the pole-star (Dhruva, 'the constant one') as a shining symbol of conjugal constancy. They also refer to the full moon night of Mārgaśīrṣa called *āgrahāyaṇī* (lit. 'coming at the beginning of the year'), probably showing a system of reckoning whereby Mārgaśīrṣa was the first month of the year. The *Gobhila Gṛhya-Sūtra* says that there are three ways of determining the time of the full moon, namely: (i) when it rises at the meeting of the day and night; (ii) when it rises after sunset; and (iii) when it stands high in the sky at sunset. It also adds rough astronomical definitions, such as 'Full moon is the greatest distance between the sun and the moon; new moon is their nearest approach'.

Finally, the *Caraṇavyūha* mentions not only a Jyotiṣa, but also an Upa-jyotiṣa or a supplementary treatise on astronomy, belonging to the class of the Pariśiṣṭas, such as the *Gobhilīya Navagraha-śānti Pariśiṣṭa* of the *Sāma-Veda* and the Pariśiṣṭas of the *Atharva-Veda.* These works, however, fall outside the Vedic period.

[26] Incidentally, this fixes the time of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* at 2500 B.C. and of the older Orion calendar at 4500 B.C. Winternitz, however, is sceptical about this theory.

16

YĀSKA AND PĀṆINI

I. YĀSKA

'THE person who is only able to recite the Veda, but does not understand its meaning, is like a post (*sthāṇu*) or a mere load-bearer (*bhāra-hāra*); but he who understands the meaning will attain to all good here and hereafter, being purged of sins by knowledge.

'Words simply learnt by rote, but not understood, will not enlighten when uttered, just as fuel, be it ever so dry, will not blaze if it is put into that which is not fire.'[1]

The above words mirror the mind of Yāska who, as a rational thinker, paved the way for the understanding of the meaning of the Vedic texts by compiling the *Nirukta*, one of the most authoritative, richly documented, and closely knit treatises on exegesis. It appears that Yāska had to contend hard against his opponents entrenched in the position that the Vedic words merely uttered confer the highest merit, for he emphasizes that 'speech without meaning is a barren cow, a mere delusion (*adhenu māyā*), and an external symbol unfit to grant the object of desire' and that 'the meaning of speech is its fruit and flower' (*arthaṁ vācaḥ puṣpa-phalam*, I.20). These significant utterances of Yāska fit in with that ideal of knowledge which was in the ascendency about his time, and which, proceeding from the gnostic tendencies of the Upaniṣads, culminated in the movement of Buddhism. To such as those, like Kautsa, who held that the text of the Veda was meaningless, he retorted by saying, 'It is not the fault of the post if a blind man does not see it' (I.16). When he says, 'Eternal indeed is the scorn of the ignorant for knowledge' (*nityaṁ hi avijñātur vijñāne asūyā*, II.4), he expresses his own attitude towards the perversely ignorant.

AGE AND PREDECESSORS

Most scholars are in agreement in placing Yāska about 700 B.C. He comes at the head of a distinguished line of teachers, including such great names as Śākaṭāyana, Gārgya, Śākapūṇi, Gālava, Śākalya, and Aupamanyava. Of the texts that preceded him, he refers to the *Ṛg-Veda* as the 'Daśatayī Saṁhitā', its Pada-text (*pada-pāṭha*) by Śākalya, whose mistake in analysing *vāyaḥ* into *vā* and *yaḥ* he has pointed out (VI.28), the Brāhmaṇas, and the Vedāṅgas. Of the last, he gives the place of honour to grammar, treating

[1] *Nirukta*, I.18.

the *nirukta* (etymology) as a complement of *vyākaraṇa* (grammar), besides being a means of accomplishing its own object (*vyākaraṇasya kārtsnyaṁ svārthasādhakaṁ ca,* I.15). He knew the Pārṣada literature by which may be understood the phonetic and grammatical studies which were being developed under the auspices of the different Vedic schools. In his opinion, the Pada-text formed the basis of the Pārṣada studies. Yāska should come prior to both the *Ṛk Prātiśākhya* and Pāṇini. His Vedāṅgas, therefore, could not refer to these particular treatises, but to earlier works of authors like Gārgya and Śākaṭāyana and to the phonetic observations of the *pariṣads* (assemblies) in the various *caraṇas* (schools of the Veda). Dr. Sarup considers the Brāhmaṇas to be implied in the Vedāṅgas of Yāska, but these works, although containing substantial exegetical material, have nowhere been classed as Vedāṅga texts. Yāska has commented on about 600 Vedic stanzas in the *Nirukta,* and quotes profusely from the Brāhmaṇas. For instance, out of his three quotations to explain the etymology of '*vṛtra*', two are based on Brāhmaṇa passages.[2] Of the contemporary schools, he cites the views of the grammarians (*vaiyākaraṇas*), the young and old ritualists (*yājñikas*), the euhemerists (*aitihāsikas*) who took recourse to legendary lore for the explanation of Vedic stanzas, and the ascetics (*parivrājakas*). The etymologists (*nairuktas*) are invoked twenty times. Yāska thus represents the perfected fruit of the labours of a long line of teachers building up the science of Vedic interpretation.

THE NIGHAṆṬU AND THE NIRUKTA

The *Nirukta,* a book of twelve *adhyāyas* (chapters), is a commentary on a traditional list of Vedic words known as the *Nighaṇṭu*. Even in the time of Yāska, opinions differed about the exact derivation of this word. The teacher Aupamanyava, cited about a dozen times by Yāska, held: 'As these are the quoted words of the Vedas, they are called *nighaṇṭavas* on account of their being quoted (*ni-gamanāt*).'[3] Yāska seems to concur in this view, although others interpreted the word differently signifying a list in which the words were either simply fixed (from the root *han*), or simply collected together (from the root *hṛ*). The fact is that the words of the *Nighaṇṭu* were of specific usage in the Vedic texts and not of a general application in the language. Tracing the origin and the necessity of compiling the *Nighaṇṭu* list of words, Yāska says, 'Former *ṛṣis* had direct intuitive insight into *dharma,* and *brahma* (Veda) made itself manifest to them. They handed down by oral instruction (*upadeśa*) the hymns to later generations who were destitute of direct intuitive insight. The later generations, declining in powers of

[2] *Ibid.,* II.16.
[3] *Ibid.,* I.1.

upadeśa, compiled this work (i.e. the *Nighaṇṭu*) in order to comprehend the meaning' (I.20).

Yāska's own work was developed as a commentary on the *Nighaṇṭu*, but a closer examination of the two works shows that Yāska exercises much freedom in the choice of his basic material. The *Nighaṇṭu* is a work of three *kāṇḍas* (sections) in five *adhyāyas* (chapters); the first three contain a list of 1,280 words, the fourth a list of 278 words, known as *aikapadikam* (homonyms), and the fifth a list of 151 names of deities. The *Nirukta* corresponds to this threefold division. The first three *adhyāyas*, known as the *Naighaṇṭuka-kāṇḍa*, are devoted to the etymologies of words of the first three chapters of the *Nighaṇṭu*; but out of the 1,280 words, only a little more than one-third are *Nighaṇṭu* words in their proper places.[4] In addition to the *Nighaṇṭu* words, Yāska also includes the etymologies of a large number of *nigama* words, i.e. words extracted from Vedic passages (1,310 in all according to the list of Sköld). The second part of the *Nirukta* (IV to VI), called the *Naigama-kāṇḍa*, etymologizes nearly all the 278 words of the fourth *adhyāya* of the *Nighaṇṭu*. The third part of the *Nirukta* (VII to XII), known as the *Daivata-kāṇḍa*, is based on the fifth *adhyāya* of the *Nighaṇṭu*, of which most of the 151 names of deities are explained with their etymologies. Thus the framework of the *Nirukta* follows that of the *Nighaṇṭu*, and deals with groups of synonyms (I-III), homonyms (IV-VI), and deities (VII-XII).

THE LINGUISTIC MATERIAL

The linguistic material with which Yāska deals was taken from the Vedic literature, but he does not fail to notice the distinction between and the affinity of the Vedic language and the classical Sanskrit. The current speech of Yāska's time is named Bhāṣā in the *Nirukta*. The spoken Sanskrit of Pāṇini's time is also called Bhāṣā in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*. Yāska is conscious of the close relationship between the Bhāṣā and the Vedic speech (*anu-adhyāyam*). He further adds that some of the Vedic nouns are derived from roots of classical Sanskrit, and also roots of classical Sanskrit from Vedic roots (II.3). At first sight, he would here seem to regard the Vedic and the classical Sanskrit as two distinct languages with two different sets of roots. To Kautsa's criticism that the Vedic hymns are meaningless, Yāska replies that they are significant because their words are identical with those of the spoken language (I.16). As Dr. Sarup explains this anomaly, the position seems to be that the Vedic roots from which classical nouns are derived do not occur in verbal form in the classical language, and, similarly, those classical roots from which

[4] H. Sköld, *The Nirukta: Its Place in Old Hindu Literature and Its Etymology*, p. 177.

some of the Vedic nouns are derived are not traceable in verbal form in the Vedic texts. For example, Agni is called *damūnas* in the Vedic hymns, which word is to be derived from the root *dam*, 'to become tame' (IV.5). Now Yāska's contention seems to be that, although the root *dam* is still used in the sense of 'becoming tame' in classical Sanskrit, it does not occur in this sense in the Vedic language. Yāska's acquaintance with the classical language or Bhāṣā was not of a less intimate character, since, in a well-known passage, he notices the dialectal differences of spoken Sanskrit or what otherwise may be called provincialisms. In another passage his geographical horizon extends to Kīkaṭa, the name of a country where non-Aryan tribes like Maganda and Pramaganda dwelt. This is possibly a reference to Magadha. Kīkaṭa is explained by Yāska as a Prakritized form of *kiṅkṛta* (*kim*=*kī*; *kṛta*=*kaṭa*), signifying 'what have they done, or of what use is the performance of religious rites?' (VI.32).

ETYMOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES

The bed-rock of the doctrine of etymologists was that nouns were derived from verbs. Yāska also subscribed to this view, and his etymologies pursue this principle. Amongst the grammarians there was a distinct school that held the same view. Its leading exponent was Śākaṭāyana, whose opinions are also cited by Pāṇini. Patañjali attributes to Śākaṭāyana the same, rather extreme, views on derivation. Yāska himself says (I.13) that Śākaṭāyana derived parts of one word from different roots in spite of the meaning being irrelevant, e.g. in order to explain *sat-ya*, he derived *ya* from the causal form of the root *i*, 'to go', and *sat* from the regular form *as*, 'to be'. The *Uṇādi-Sūtras* appear to have been the product of the school of Śākaṭāyana, and may in their original form have been written by him, being best suited to serve the theory that he upheld. A sober view was that of Gārgya; according to him as well as other unnamed grammarians, not all nouns are traceable to verbs, but only those the accent and the grammatical form of which are regular (*Nirukta*, I.12). Both Pāṇini and Patañjali favour this balanced view, and may have been the followers of the school of Gārgya. Yāska, as a representative etymologist, seems to have harboured a bias for the dogma of his own school, since to the objection of Śākaṭāyana's overdoing etymology he remarks: 'An individual who indulged in such irrelevant derivation should be censured' (*saiṣā puruṣa-garhā*, I.14); the commentary adds 'but not the science of etymology' (*na śāstra-garhā*).

A clear statement of Yāska's method of derivation is contained in the following: 'With reference to this (etymology), words, the accent and the grammatical form of which are regular and are accompanied by an explanatory radical modification, should be derived in the ordinary manner.

But the meaning being irrelevant, and the explanatory radical modification being non-existent, one should always examine them with regard to their meaning, by the analogy of some (common) course of action. If there be no such analogy, *one should explain them even by the community of a single syllable or letter*; *but one should never give up the attempt at derivation*' (*natveva na nirbrūyāt*, II.1). This is not far from what Śākaṭāyana would have staked his reputation on. In a more complacent tone he tenders the advice that 'one should not explain either isolated syllables, or to a non-grammarian, or to a non-residential pupil, or to one who is incapable of understanding it. Eternal indeed is the scorn of the ignorant for knowledge; therefore, one should take care to explain (the words) to an initiated pupil, or to one who is capable of knowing them, to the intelligent and the diligent' (*medhāvine tapasvine vā*, II.4). Yāska's approach to the whole problem is from a high pedestal. He is conscious that etymology is a part of Vedic knowledge and can be learnt fruitfully only by one who is distinguished by outright sincerity in the pursuit of his goal of knowledge and wisdom.

We may now see Yāska's principles of etymology in action. To take only a few instances: The word '*vrata*' means 'action, vow, and food'. It is respectively derived from the roots (i) *ni* + *vṛ* (to ward off), (ii) *vṛ* (to choose), and (iii) *ā* + *vṛ* (to cover)—(II.13). Here Yāska is rationalizing the meanings given in the Brāhmaṇa and Upaniṣadic passages from the etymological point of view. The case of '*vṛtra*' has been referred to already. Out of its three etymologies, viz. from *vṛ* (to cover), *vṛt* (to turn or roll), and *vṛdh* (to grow), the first two are rooted in the Brāhmaṇa passages (*Śatapatha*, I.1.3.4.; I.6.3.1). For the word '*agni*' a fourfold derivation is proposed, namely, *agra* + *nī*, *aṅga* + *nī*, and *a* + *knū* (to make wet), and a fourth etymology advanced by Śākapūṇi, which is a good instance to illustrate the extremes to which the Nairukta school could go. 'Agni is derived from three verbs—from going, from shining or burning, and from leading—by taking the letter *a* from the root *i* (to go); the letter *ga* from the root *añj* (to smear) or *dah* (to burn); and lastly the root *nī* (to lead), i.e. *a* + *ga* + *nī* taken from three different roots' (VII.14). From a strictly etymological point of view this can be hardly acceptable, although Yāska may be taken to record faithfully the views held before his time and although some of those popular etymologies may have found their support in Brāhmaṇa passages all of which cannot be traced.

The example of the word '*indra*' for which Yāska (X.8) has recorded fifteen different etymologies completely illustrates not only the method, but also the limitations under which Yāska was working to build up a rational system of derivation. He seems to take it as his special concern

to explain by etymology the various meanings that were associated with the word in the cogitations of the Brāhmaṇas.[5]

Of these etymologies 1-5 are based on *irā*, a drink which is so dear to Indra in a group of hymns; 6-7 on *indu*, a name of *soma* which is such a favourite drink of Indra (cf. *Indrāyendo pari srava, Ṛ.V.*, X.112-14); 8-9 are based on a Brāhmaṇa passage (*Śatapatha*, VI.1.1.2); 10 is based on the opinion of Āgrāyaṇa and is endorsed by Pāṇini (*indra+sṛṣṭa*); 11 on the view of Aupamanyava, strongly supported by an Āraṇyaka passage; 12-14 on the Vedic tradition of Indra's overwhelming might in conquering his foes; and 15 on his beneficence towards his sacrificers. In all cases, except 8-9 and 12, the word is split up into two parts for the sake of derivation; cases 8-9 and 12 accord with the *Sāma-Veda pada-pāṭha* which does not divide the word.[6] Derivation No. 12 is supported by an *uṇādi-sūtra* (*ṛjrendra* etc., 186). Comparable to this overwhelming solicitude of Yāska to derive '*indra*' is Pāṇini's attempt, not so much to suggest derivations, as to put his seal of approval on the morphology of the word '*indriya*' as established by the immemorial usage of his predecessors (cf. Pāṇini, V.2.93: *indriyam, indra-liṅgam, indra-dṛṣṭam, indra-sṛṣṭam, indra-juṣṭam, indra-dattam, iti vā*, the last clause of which, *iti vā*, is the same as that of Yāska, and is intended to make the scope of the *sūtra* as wide as may be desired).

From this example we see what an enormous mass of tradition Yāska had to reckon with. He should therefore be judged from the standpoint that inspired him, and not from the strictly etymological approach of the modern linguistic science, as some critics are prone to do.[7]

[5] These etymologies (cf. Sköld, *op. cit.*, p. 210) are:

(1) *irā*, 'drink, refreshing draught; comfort, enjoyment' +*dṛī*, 'to burst, break asunder, split open';
(2) *irā+dā*, 'to give';
(3) *irā+dhā*, 'to put';
(4) *irā+dṛī* (causative);
(5) *irā+dhṛ*, 'to hold' (causative);
(6) *indu*, '*soma*'+*dru*, 'to run';
(7) *indu+ram*, 'to rejoice';
(8) *indh*, 'to set on fire, kindle';
(9) same as 8.
(10) *idam*, 'this' (because he does this, i.e. everything);
(11) *idam*, 'this' (because he sees this, i.e. everything);
(12) *ind*, 'to be strong';
(13) *ind+dṛ* (causative);
(14) *ind+dru* (causative);
(15) *ind+(ā+dṛ)*, 'to respect' (the sacrifices).

[6] Suryakanta, *Ṛktantra*, Introduction, p. 58.

[7] Sköld, *op. cit.*, p. 181: 'We ought rather to be astonished because the *Nirukta* contains so many good and true etymologies as it does'; cf. also V. K. Rajavade, *Yāska's Nirukta*, I. Introduction: 'Pāṇini's grammar is beyond doubt an astonishing feat of human intellect; I do not think that such praise can be bestowed on the *Nirukta*' (p. xliv).

ETERNITY OF WORDS

The subject of the eternity of words has been hotly debated by the grammarians and other philosophical schools[8] as the most fundamental problem having a bearing on the value and sanction of textual authority. Audumbarāyaṇa, as quoted by Yāska, held that the words are transitory (lit. last only so long as they are being uttered, I.1). Possibly this was also the view of the school of the Taittirīyas, whose *Taittirīya Prātiśākhya* defines *lopa* as *vināśa* or annihilation (I.57). Pāṇini, as a grammarian, subscribing to the eternity of sound has defined *lopa* as a grammatical process involving simply *adarśana* or disappearance (I.1.60). Kātyāyana, in a comment on Pāṇini (IV.4.1), refers to the two opposite schools under the name of Naityaśabdika and Kāryaśabdika. We are indebted to Patañjali for the remark that both Pāṇini and Kātyāyana were advocates of the view holding words to be eternal. The sympathies of Yāska lay with the grammarians. He argues by implication that although we admit the various grammatical processes applying to words, including the process of *vināśa* or destruction, it must be understood that *vināśa* is only a link in the chain of six modifications which inevitably follow each other, and therefore *destruction* only marks the end of a certain state, but does not preclude the first state or the pre-existence (*pūrva-bhāva*) of a thing. For this explanation he invokes the help of a pre-eminent authority named Vārṣyāyaṇi, who expounded the chain of sixfold causation, in which the beginning and the end are only relative terms and do not preclude each other (I.2). An ingenious argument is adduced by Yāska in this context. He argues that the knowledge residing in human beings being impermanent, the *mantra* in the Veda is justified in giving directions about ritualistic action. This is tantamount to the statement that the Veda as the repository of eternal knowledge consists of eternal words and is necessary for human guidance. The origin and nature of *śabda* forms a no less important subject of discussion in the Buddhist literature where its impermanence is emphasized, as in the case of the Taittirīyas: '*Sadda* (*śabda*) is an action', '*Sadda* is physical vibration'.[9]

PREPOSITIONS AND ONOMATOPOEIA

About the controversy whether prepositions (*upasargas*) possess a sense or are devoid of it, Yāska informs us that Śākaṭāyana held the view that an *upasarga* detached from its verb has no meaning, i.e. the *upasarga* is only a *dyotaka* of meaning and not a *vācaka*. Gārgya, on the other hand, believed

[8] *Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā*, I.1.6-23; *Vedānta*, I.3.28; I.4.28; II.1.4; *Vaiśeṣika*, II.2.21-37; *Sāṁkhya*, V.58-60; *Nyāya*, I.1.7.54-57; II.2.13-17.

[9] *Kathāvatthu*, XII.3; IX.9-10.

that prepositions did have a meaning. Yāska seems to support the latter view since he begins by recording a string of *upasargas* with their meanings. This controversy was not unknown to Pāṇini, who, in his inimitable way, shows his preference for the middle path by striking a balance between the two extreme views. Accordingly in *sūtra* I.4.93, he declares the *upasargas* *adhi* and *pari* to be meaningless (*anarthaka*), whereas in other places he discusses their meaning.

In another matter, Yāska is at one with the grammarians, viz. his acceptance of the principle of onomatopoeia (*anukaraṇa*) as a phenomenon of the language. The teacher Aupamanyava denied the existence of onomatopoeic words, but Pāṇini had clearly accepted *anukaraṇa* as a factor in the formation of words (I.4.62). According to Yāska, onomatopoeia is mostly found in the names of birds ; the word '*dundubhi*' is alternatively explained by him as onomatopoeical (*dundubhir-iti śabdānukaraṇam*, IX.12).

MONOTHEISTIC VIEWS

As a Vedic teacher Yāska's most outstanding contribution consists in his bringing to a focus the scattered strands of the *ādhyātmika* (spiritual) interpretation of Vedic knowledge. Conscious of this fact, he can be traced building up to that point. According to his definition 'a *ṛṣi* is so called as he has obtained a vision of Truth (*ṛṣir-darśanāt*) ; the fountain of self-existent knowledge flowed towards them when they were engaged in *tapas*' (II.11). The seers of such pre-eminent position were those to whom Speech revealed herself completely as a loving maiden exposes herself to her husband (I.19). The intuitive knowledge enshrined in the minds of such great teachers certainly related to the highest spiritual truth, namely, identity of the human soul with Brahman. Yāska himself aphoristically states in the beginning of his treatise that the Deity and the *adhyātma* (Self) are the fruit and flower of speech (*devatādhyātme vā vācaḥ puṣpaphale*, I.20). Discussing the multiplicity of the many gods and their relationship to one pre-eminent Soul, Yāska introduces the following statement as the keystone of his position: *Māhābhāgyād-devatāyā eka ātmā bahudhā stūyate. Ekasya ātmano anye devāh pratyaṅgāni bhavanti. . . . itaretarajanmāno bhavanti. Itaretara prakṛtayaḥ. Karmajanmānaḥ. Ātmajanmānaḥ. . . . Ātmā sarvaṁ devasya*—'It is because of His great divisibility (*māhābhāgyāt*) that they apply many names to Him one after another. The other Angels (*devas*) come to be (*bhavanti*) sub-members (*pratyaṅgāni*) of the One Essence (*ekasyātmanaḥ*). Their becoming is a birth from one another ; they are of one another's nature ; they originate in function (*karma*) ; Essence is their origin. . . . Essence (*ātmā*) is the whole of what an Angel is' (VII.4).[10]

[10] Cf. A. K. Coomaraswamy, *Vedic 'Monotheism'*, p. 84.

The basic unity of one great Soul manifesting itself through various names and forms is traced by Yāska to that well-known Vedic *mantra* in the *Asyavāmīya-sūkta*: 'They call Him Indra, Mitra, Varuṇa, and Agni ; (they) also (say) that He is the divine Garutmat of beautiful wings. The sages speak of Him who is One in various ways ; they call Him Agni, Yama, Mātariśvan'.[11] On this Yāska comments: 'The sages speak of this Agni, the great Soul, in many ways' (*imamevāgniṁ mahāntam ātmānaṁ ekam ātmānaṁ bahudhā medhāvino vadanti*, VII.18). Again, adverting to the deities of the introductory and the concluding oblations (*prayāja, anuyāja*), Yāska, after quoting several Brāhmaṇa passages specifying Agni, metres, seasons, and animals as their deities, holds that Prāṇa and Ātman were equally the deities of the *prayāja* and *anuyāja* offerings. In the 13th and 14th chapters of the *Nirukta*, which are appended to it as supplementary portions, the supereminence of the *mahān-ātman* is emphatically propounded, and a string of its multiple names pointing to the unity of One Essence is worked out. These two books record the best model of presenting an *ādhyātmika* commentary on the Vedic *mantras.*

The treatise of Yāska, in its highly compressed style, helps us not only with the etymologies of words, but also with the clarification of the main Vedic thought so far as its wonderful system of pantheistic monotheism is concerned.

II. PĀṆINI

Pāṇini, author of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* (a work in 'Eight Chapters'), is the most shining star to rise in the intellectual horizon of ancient India. Seldom has the influence of a single person been of such a far-reaching character in moulding the language of his country as that of Pāṇini. He may be regarded as the starting point of the Sanskrit age, the literature of which is almost entirely dominated by the linguistic standards fixed by him. His methodology, logic, and the very apparatus of thinking have disciplined for about twenty-five centuries Sanskrit authors of all classes.

Pāṇini's grammar is superior to all similar works of other countries by the thoroughness with which it investigates the roots of the language and the formation of its words, by its precision of expression, and, above all, by its marvellous ingenuity in using a concise terminology and a style marked by profound concentration to cover the entire material of the language within the shortest possible compass. In the words of Macdonell, 'The results attained by the Indians in the systematic analysis of language surpass

[11] *Ṛ.V.*, I.164.46.

those arrived at by any other nation, and the credit of this achievement entirely goes to Pāṇini'. Pāṇini marks the climax of a succession of distinguished teachers, devoted to phonetical and grammatical enquiries, many of whom have been quoted by him. A date *c.* fifth century B.C. would seem to satisfy all available hypotheses bearing on his relative chronology, although some scholars put him a century later.

BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS

Patañjali and Yuan Chwang are our trustworthy sources for details of Pāṇini's life. A traditional legendary version is also available in the *Mañjuśrī-mūlakalpa* (*c.* A.D. 800) and the *Kathāsaritsāgara* (eleventh century A.D.). Yuan Chwang recorded his material about Pāṇini after a personal visit to the grammarian's birth-place. He states that Ṛṣi Pāṇini who composed the *śabda-vidyā* (science of words) was born at Śalātura. In Sanskrit literature Pāṇini is called 'Śālāturīya' (of Śalātura). Śalātura is modern Lahur, a small town four miles north-west of Ohind, situated in the angle formed by the junction of the Kabul with the Indus. Śalātura continued as a celebrated centre of Pāṇinian studies: 'The children of this town, who are his (Pāṇini's) disciples, revere his eminent qualities and a statue erected to his memory still exists.'

About Pāṇini himself Yuan Chwang proceeds to say: 'In most ancient times letters were very numerous. In the process of ages . . . the *devas* descended spiritually to guide the people. Such was the origin of the ancient letters. From this time, and after it, the language spread and passed its (former) bounds . . . *Ṛṣis* belonging to different schools each drew up forms of letters . . . Students without ability were unable to make use (of these characters). And now men's lives were reduced to the length of a hundred years, when the Ṛṣi Pāṇini was born; he was from his birth intensively informed about men and things. The times being dull and careless, he wished to reform the vague and false rules of writing and speaking, . . . to fix the rules and correct improprieties. As he wandered about asking for right ways (wisdom and knowledge), he encountered Īśvaradeva, and recounted to him the plan of his undertaking. Īśvaradeva said, "Wonderful, I will assist you in this". The Ṛṣi, having received instructions, retired. He then laboured incessantly and put forth all his power of mind. He collected a multitude of words and made a book on letters which contained a thousand *ślokas* . . . It contained everything from the first till then, without exception, respecting letters and words. He then closed it and sent it to the king (supreme ruler of the land), who exceedingly prized it and issued an edict that throughout the kingdom it should be used and

taught to others . . . and so from that time masters have received it and handed it down in its completeness for the good of the world.'[12]

This account about the origin of grammar, Pāṇini's eminent intellectual qualities, and his literary method essentially agrees with that given by Patañjali. He also refers to 'a period of thousand divine years during which time Bṛhaspati expounded letters to Indra. In this wide world there is the rich literature of the four Vedas with their *aṅgas* (auxiliary works) and mystic portions and a host of *śākhās*, etc. . . . all this constitutes the vast source of language'. In such a picture different schools of grammatical teaching, including such illustrious names as Śākaṭāyana, Gārgya, Śākalya, Bhāradvāja, and Āpiśali, arose and composed their systems. Patañjali then says that there was a lessening of men's lives and a decline in their mental powers. It was to reform such dull and careless beings that Pāṇini wrote his system.

In chartering extensive sources for the collection of his material, Pāṇini's wide peregrinations in search of fresh material and the method of personal discussion and interrogation which he followed to elicit facts were in the true tradition of the Takṣaśilā University, to which Pāṇini seems to have been indebted for his intellectual discipline and higher training. Pāṇini did not work haphazard, but devised for himself a well-conceived plan of his undertaking. Both Yuan Chwang and Patañjali agree as to Pāṇini's intense labours marked with profound concentration and high mental powers: 'The teacher of established authority, holding sacred grass in hand and seated in a holy spot facing east, composed the *sūtras* with deep endeavour.'[13] According to Yuan Chwang, Pāṇini's work was a complete digest of everything known from the first till then respecting letters and words. Patañjali also designates the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* as a *mahat-śāstraugha* (an extensive ocean of treatise), hails it as 'the great system of Pāṇini perfectly accomplished' (*mahat suvihitaṁ Pāṇinīyam*), and records that Pāṇini had brought together in his treatise the phonetical and grammatical material relating to all the different Vedic schools (*sarva-veda-pāriṣadaṁ hīdaṁ śāstram*), a position similar to that taken up by Yāska for the *Nirukta*. In the domain of grammar, Pāṇini ousted all his predecessors by the excellence and comprehensiveness of his work, just as Yāska had supplanted them in the field of exegetics.

Yuan Chwang's reference to Pāṇini's visit to the court of the king and to the latter's approval of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, is corroborated more explicitly in the accounts of the *Mañjuśrī-mūlakalpa*, Somadeva's *Kathāsaritsāgara*, and Tāranātha's 'History of Buddhism in India' in Tibetan, which relate the

[12] Beal, *Si-Yu-Ki: Buddhist Records of the Western World* (London), pp. 114-15.
[13] *Pramāṇabhūta ācāryo darbha-pavitra-pāṇiḥ śucāvavakāśe prāṅmukha upaviṣya mahatā yatnena sūtraṁ praṇayati sma* (*Bhāṣya*).

story of Pāṇini's friendship with the Nanda emperor arising out of the former's mission to the celebrated capital of Pāṭaliputra, where in a great royal synod (*rājasabhā*) Pāṇini's work was accorded universal recognition and approbation.[14] Both Kātyāyana and Patañjali refer to Pāṇini with the greatest respect (*bhagavataḥ Pāṇineḥ siddham*, VIII.4.68), and the latter specially styles him as an *ācārya* who was auspicious (*māṅgalika*), authoritative (*pramāṇabhūta*), highly intellectual (*analpamati*), and conversant with the grammatical operations of words (*vṛttajña*).

PĀṆINI'S TEXT

Pāṇini's style is that of the *sūtras*, most economically and perfectly worded rules, to an interpretation of which the key is supplied by Pāṇini himself. The text of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, a book divided into eight *adhyāyas* of four sections each, consists of about 4,000, or to put more precisely 3,983, *sūtras*. Their extent, as recorded by Yuan Chwang and in agreement with reality, is equal to 1,000 verses of 32 syllables each. To this text are appended two supplements: (i) Gaṇapāṭha or a list of 261 groups of words (*gaṇas*), the archetype of each being referred to in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* itself and (ii) Dhātupāṭha or a list of 1,944 roots of the language, comprehending both the classical Sanskrit and the Vedic language. Pāṇini must have taken great pains in collecting this material by tapping the twofold sources of the current language and the literary texts. The task seems to have been performed with amazing thoroughness, displaying powers of minute observation to which tribute is paid by subsequent writers (*makatī sūkṣmekṣikā vartate sūtrakārasya*). The linguistic material, both in the Dhātupāṭha and in the Gaṇapāṭha, is full of great interest and value for the linguist and the historian. In the former, we come across a comprehensive list of the roots in the spoken language of Pāṇini's time, including the northern and the eastern divisions of the country as well as the many dialectal regions corresponding to the areas of modern Indian languages which have inherited substantially the roots listed by Pāṇini. For example, the root *pra-√snu* (mod. *panhānā*) may have belonged to the east and *payasyati* (mod. *pavāsnā*) to the western dialects, but both are noticed by Pāṇini. Similarly, in the Gaṇapāṭha, we find representative lists of (i) towns, villages, and *janapadas* (communities), (ii) Vedic *śākhās* (branches) and *caraṇas* (schools), and (iii) important family names (*gotras*) as prevailing in the wide area from Sind to the easternmost limits of India. This historical material gives to the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* a special value for the historian of ancient

[14] See the present writers' *India as Known to Pāṇini* (pp. 462 ff.) for a detailed discussion of this tradition with special reference to the date of Pāṇini.

India, more so as the evidence in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* is of the same authoritative nature as that from epigraphic or numismatic sources.

COMMENTARIES

Pāṇini himself seems to have taught his pupils the treatise he had enunciated, as is evident from Patañjali's reference to two alternative explanations, both having the sanction of Pāṇini's own instruction.[15] The earliest commentaries (*vyākhyānas*) were of a simple character comprising *carcā* (=*pada-vigraha*), *udāharaṇa*, *pratyudāharaṇa*, and *anuvṛtti*. In course of time, the grammatical literature based on Pāṇini underwent great expansion, and the following commentaries and sub-commentaries cover almost a period of 2,000 years:

(1) Commentaries: Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya* or *Cūrṇi* and Vāmana and Jayāditya's *Kāśikā*. While the former is the most authoritative, the latter is the most exhaustive and lucid one, a veritable mine of information, both historical and linguistic.

(2) Sub-commentaries: Kaiyaṭa's *Bhāṣya-pradīpa* and Bhartṛhari's *Mahābhāṣya-dīpikā* or *Tripādī* on *Mahābhāṣya*. *Nyāsa* and *Padamañjarī* on *Kāśikā*.

(3) Glosses on sub-commentaries: Nāgeśa's *Uddyota* on Kaiyaṭa's *Pradīpa*. There are various other *vṛttis* such as *Kuṇi-vṛtti*, *Māthurī-vṛtti*, and *Bhāga-vṛtti*, which are known only by name and do not seem to be extant.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

We have already alluded to the geographical data in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, specially the Gaṇapāṭha. References to place-names occur in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* to show their derivation from one of the following four factors: (i) this is found there; (ii) the place was founded by such and such person; (iii) the place was the abode of such a person or a community; and (iv) the place is located in the proximity to a known object (IV.2.67-70). Added to these were some other factors, all of which together resulted in a voluminous quota of geographical names in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, equalled in richness only by the accounts of the Greek geographers and by the 'Bhuvanakośa' (the world) chapters of the *Mahābhārata* and the Purāṇas. Pāṇini's geographical horizon extends from Kamboja (Pamir) in the north-west to Sūramasa (Surmā valley of Assam) in the north-east, to Aśmaka on the Godāvarī in the south, and to Sauvīra (Sind) in the west. His references in the *sūtras* include such names as Prakaṇva (*Parikanioi*, Ferghana), Gandhāra, Sindhu (Sind-Sagar-Doab), Sauvīra (Upper Sind) with Śārkara (Sukkur), Pāraskara (Parkar), Kaccha (Kutch), Kekaya (Jhelum, Shahpur, Gujrat), Madra (capital at Śākala

[15] *Sūtra*, I.4.1: *ubhayathā hyācāryeṇa śiṣyāḥ sūtraṁ pratipāditāḥ*; cf. also *Kāśikā*, V.1.50; V.1.94; V.4.21.

or Sialkot), Uśīnara (a part of the Vāhika country), Ambaṣṭha, Trigarta (Pathankot, Kangra), Kālakūṭa (region from the Upper Yamunā to the Sutlej), Kuru, Pratyagratha (Pāñcāla), Bhāradvāja (Upper Garhwal), Kośala, Kāśī, Vṛji, Magadha, Kaliṅga, Avanti, and Kunti (Kontwar in former Gwalior State). Pāṇini is acquainted with the *uttara-patha* (the northern route) which traversed as the artery of communication the whole of northern India from the mouth of the Gaṅgā to Bactria and of which a detailed account with stages is given by the Greek geographers. Pāṇini also refers to Varaṇā (the hill fortress of Aornos stormed by Alexander), Varṇu (Bannu), Suvāstu (Swat), Saṅkala (Sangalawala-Tiba), Sāṅkāśya (Sankissa), Hastināpura, and Kūcavāra (Kuca). An important reference is '*kanthā*', a word of the Śaka language denoting town, which was used with the place-names in the Uśīnara country and in the Varṇu valley. Sten Konow identifies *kanthā* with Sogdian '*kanda*' (city) and Śaka *kantha* (city).[16] Pāṇini's acquaintance with the Prācya (Eastern) and Udīcya (Northern) divisions of India seems to have been very thorough, especially of the latter.

SOCIAL LIFE

The *Aṣṭādhyāyī* also throws important light on the social life of the period including important details about food and drink, games and amusements, proper names, personal dress, etc. We learn that a special kind of wine known as *Kāpiśāyana madhu* was being imported into India from the ancient town of Kāpiśī or Begram in the north of Afghanistan.[17] Reference is made to *mahāvrīhi* (VI.2.38), an excellent variety of rice grown in Magadha, 'the grains of which were large and scented and of an exquisite taste, specially remarkable for its shining colour', with which Yuan Chwang was entertained during his stay at Nālandā. Another equally famous variety of rice was that grown on the banks of the Devikā (mod. Deg) river (VII.3.1), flowing through the ancient Madra country (Sialkot, Gujranwala, and Shekhupura Districts). An excellent variety of rice is still grown in this area. Reference is made to blankets called *pāṇḍukambala* used in upholstering chariots (IV.2.11) which were manufactured in ancient Swat or Uḍḍiyāna country and from there imported into North India for the use of the army.[18] Other special chariots mounted with the skin of tigers and leopards known as *dvaipa* and *vaiyāghra* (IV.2.12) were also in use during the period of the Jātakas and the *Mahābhārata*.[19] Specially interesting is Pāṇini's mention of a kind of garden sports peculiar to East

[16] Sten Konow, *Kharoshṭhī Inscriptions with the Exception of Those of Aśoka (Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol. II. Pt. I, London, 1929), p. 43.
[17] Pāṇini, IV.2.99, as read with Kauṭilya, II.25.
[18] *Jātakas*, IV.352 ; VI.500.
[19] *Vessantara Jātaka*, VI.503 ; *Sabhāparvan*, 51.35 ; 61.4.

India (*Prācāṁ krīḍāyām*), the names of which are regulated by no less than three *sūtras* (II.2.17 ; III.3.109 ; VI.2.74). These sports, like the *śālabhañjikā, uddālaka-puṣpabhañjikā, vāraṇa-puṣpapracāyikā*, possess a long and wide-spread tradition both in art and literature. True to the conception of *śilpa* (arts and crafts) prevailing in the Jātaka period, Pāṇini regards music, both vocal (III.1.146) and instrumental (IV.4.55-56), and also dance (III.1.145) as *śilpa*. Amongst the names of stars, the list (IV.3.34) begins with the name of the star Śraviṣṭhā which agrees with the system of Vedāṅga astronomy and must point to a time anterior to the revision of the *nakṣatra* list. This period lies at the close of the fifth century B.C., and 405 B.C. would thus give the lower limit of Pāṇini's date.

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Of the economic data that can be gleaned from the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, the one relating to the punch-marked coins is most important. The numismatic evidence in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, the Jātakas, and the *Arthaśāstra* relates exclusively to the punch-marked series. Pāṇini knows the standard *kārṣāpaṇa*, *ardha* (half, also *bhāga*) and *pāda* (quarter) *kārṣāpaṇas*, and *māṣa* (one-sixteenth *kārṣāpaṇa* or *raupya-māṣa*). One of the most interesting facts of Indian numismatic history is Pāṇini's knowledge of two kinds of silver punch-marked coins: a standard-weight coinage of 32 *rattis*, which seems to have been introduced by the Nandas, and heavy weight coinage of 40 *rattis*, which is named *viṁśatika* in two *sūtras* (V.1.27, 32), from its weight being equal to 20 *māṣas*. He also refers to *śatamāna*, a very early coinage of 100 *ratti* (*raktikā*) weight identified with the bent-bar silver punch-marked pieces, and also another coin named *śāṇa* (V.1.35 ; VII.3.17) which, according to the *Āraṇyakaparvan* (Poona edition, 134.14), was one-eighth of a *śatamāna*.

A great mass of evidence, relating to agriculture, flora and fauna, arts and crafts, labour and wages, trade and commerce, exchange and barter, banking and loan, measures and weights, is woven into the texture of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, and lends great interest to the study of this treatise as a picture of ancient Indian life. The practice of branding cows, an ancient custom referred to in the *Maitrāyaṇī Saṁhitā* and other Vedic literature, with marks denoting ownership, and the special breeds of Kathiawari bulls (*kācha-gau*) are two important points relating to fauna. In flora, Pāṇini incorporates a peculiarity of the Punjabi language in naming the fruit of the *pīlu* tree as *pīlukuṇa* (V.2.24) which even today is called *pīlaknā*.

EDUCATIONAL DATA

In the field of education, learning, and literature, the evidence of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* is specially rich in mentioning different kinds of teachers and

students, methods of learning and rules of studentship, and Vedic schools known as the *caraṇas*. Ample light on the activities and constitution of the Vedic schools is forthcoming, e.g. the name of a *caraṇa* was also the name of the students and teachers who constituted it; a *caraṇa* was not a static institution but subject to the laws of growth and expansion; each school secured accession to its strength by fresh admission and branches (*tad-avetaḥ*, V.1.134); the intellectual ideal and high reputation of the *caraṇas* conferred on its members a sense of glorification (*ślāghā*, V.1.134). These Vedic schools were mostly organized on the basis of free and willing association of their members. Pāṇini fully reflects the ideal of learning prevailing in his time, leading to the freedom of mind as a result of the methods of disputation, conference, and discourse. The art of book-making and the knowledge of writing were also known. The words *lipikara* and *libikara* (III.2.21) denoted a writer and *yavanānī* (IV.1.49) a form of Greek writing.

Four classes of literature are distinguished: (i) *dṛṣṭa* or revealed—to this class belong the *sāman* literature; (ii) *prokta* or taught, comprising the Chandas and Brāhmaṇa works, e.g. *śākhās* of Tittiri, Varatantu, Khaṇḍika, and Ukha; works of *ṛṣis* like Kāśyapa and Kauśika, of Kaṭha and Caraka, etc. These were developed under the auspices of the *caraṇas* which were also evolving special subjects of study like the *Bhikṣu-Sūtras*, propounded by Pārāśarya and Karmanda, as well as the *Nāṭa-Sūtras* (treatises on dramaturgy), propounded by Śilālin and Kṛśāśva; (iii) *upajñāta* or discovered, viz. works of such original authors as Pāṇini and Āpiśali; and (iv) *kṛta* or ordinary compositions like the books of stories (*ākhyāyikās*). In IV.3.88, Pāṇini refers to poetical and dramatic literature like the *Śiśukrandīya* and the *Yama-sabhīya*. The growth of specialization before the time of Pāṇini is demonstrated by his reference to the literature of commentaries (*vyākhyāna*, IV.3.66) on a variety of subjects, as rituals and sacrifices, methods of preparing *puroḍāśa*, and sections of grammar like nouns, verbs, and *kṛt* affixes.

GRAMMATICAL THEORIES

Pāṇini's views on leading grammatical topics like the eternity of words, the meaning of prepositions, and on onomatopoeia have already been noticed in connection with Yāska. The keynote to Pāṇini's point of view in relation to the practical side of his grammar is reflected in the oft-neglected, but highly important, section known as the '*Sūtrakāṇḍa*' (I.2.51-58). Here Pāṇini rises up in defence of *loka* or current usage which alone determines the meaning and definition of words. The authority of current usage (*saṁjñā*) is always superior to that of a grammarian's hypothetical derivation (*yoga*); e.g. Pañcālāḥ, the name of a region, must be understood to refer to that particular part of the country to which it is

applied, irrespective of the fact whether the Kṣatriya tribe of that name still lived there or not. This reverence for current usage much widened the scope of Pāṇini's inquiry. Instead of restricting himself to the treatment of such traditional and strictly grammatical topics as accents (*nātānatika*), cerebralization (*ṣatva-ṇatva*), vocalization (*samprasāraṇa*), composition (*sandhi, samāsa*), and declension of nouns and verbs, Pāṇini extended the field of his investigation to the entire range of the language, and the result of this approach is visible in his exhaustive treatment of the *taddhita* suffixes and in the rich harvest collected in chapters IV and V of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* comprising the manifold *vṛttis* or meanings in which secondary suffixes are added to form words. Yāska, too, noticed the *vṛttis*, but he informs us that the subtle distinctions in the meanings of words are not always free from doubt (*viśayavatyo hi vṛttayo bhavanti*, II.1).

In his laboratory, Pāṇini collected and classified all possible meanings in which words were formed and grouped them under suitable headings as *hita, kṛta, arha, rakta, vikāra*, and hundreds of others. The activities of all grades of persons and classes in society, viz. musicians, hunters, artists, shoe-makers, cooks, salesmen, traders, ferrymen, authors, mendicants, farmers, cowherds, princes, councillors, etc., were observed and recorded. Extraordinarily wide and liberal must have been the interest of Pāṇini in the lives of the people, to which the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* holds a mirror as it were.

Pāṇini's genius was based on synthesis; he shows a rare capacity to strike a balance between two extreme views or controversies, which had torn his predecessors into fiercely rival camps. He is always cautious and balanced, keeping his doors open for the views of differing schools. We are explicitly told by Patañjali that Pāṇini looked upon the *uṇādis* as underived words (*avyutpanna prātipadika*, VII.1.2,5), a view different from that of Śākaṭāyana. At the same time, he has approvingly subscribed to the principle of verbal derivation of nouns, and has therefore accorded a cursory approval to the *uṇādis*.

RELIGION

The *Aṣṭādhyāyī* also furnishes a host of details about the religious life of the people, throwing light on the gods and goddesses worshipped, the new cult of *bhakti* or devotion to deities, worship of images, performance of *yajñas*, and the institution of ascetics. His reference to the Bhakti cult of Vāsudeva and to Maskarī Parivrājaka, a name of Makkhali Gosāla, the founder of the Ājīvika order, are of historical interest. Maskarī was a determinist (Niyativādin) who ascribed every cause to fate or destiny and ruled out the element of human action or effort. Pāṇini refers to the followers of this school as Daiṣṭikas (IV.4.60). Of the other two kinds of philosophic

beliefs mentioned by him the *āstika* philosophers correspond to those whom the Buddhist books call the Issarakāraṇavādins or the theists, who held that everything in the universe originated from the supreme Being. His *nāstika* philosophers correspond to those mentioned under Natthikadiṭṭhi, including the followers of the several materialistic schools like the Annihilationists or Ucchedavādins. Pāṇini's reference to unmarried Śramaṇa nuns is clearly related to the Buddhist institution.

POLITY

As to political and administrative data, Pāṇini mentions the institution of kingship with its council of ministers (*mantri-pariṣad*), king-makers (*rāja-kṛtvan*), chief minister (*ārya-brāhmaṇa*), secret counsel (*aṣaḍakṣīṇa mantra*), urgent business (*ātyayika*), king's council (*rājasabhā*), personal bodyguards (*rāja-pratyenas*), and civil attendants of the king. Amongst administrative officers, we find reference to *adhyakṣa*, the mainstay of the steel-frame of the later Mauryan civil service, and *yukta* and *pāla* officers. There were two kinds of States in his time: (i) monarchies (*ekarāja*) and (ii) republics (*saṅgha* and *gaṇa*). The *saṅghas* were a special feature of the Vāhika country of north-western India, where there was a hegemony of *āyudhajīvi-saṅghas*, martial tribes following republican constitutions. The democratic traditions were in different stages of growth, ranging from full-fledged *gaṇas*, like the Kṣudrakas and the Mālavas, to the *pūgas* and *vrātas*, who were only bands of mercenaries living by violence, and also the *grāmaṇīyas* settled on the banks of the Indus, each organized under, and named after, one leader or *grāmaṇī* to whom they owed personal loyalty. The more advanced republics, on the other hand, were organized with a developed party system, an inner executive body with rules of quorum and fixed coat of arms (*saṅghāṅka-lakṣaṇa*). Pāṇini knows some of the Kabāili (Afghan) tribes like the Afridis (Āprīta), Mohmands (Madhumat), and Pavindas (Pavindāyana).

This picture of cultural and historical import portrayed in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* enhances the depth and interest of that great book which is a compendium of ancient institutions. The lasting value of the book, however, consists in the grammatical laws it has formulated with a masterly grasp rarely equalled anywhere else. Pāṇini's grammar serves the tree of Sanskrit language like its tap-root. Codification of the laws of that language has conferred upon it the boon of immortality. Whatever the passage of time, the Sanskrit language as fixed by Pāṇini remains for all ages.

17

VEDIC EXEGESIS

THE Vedic literature, which even in its extant form covers a vast and varied ground, is a sustained effort at recording the spiritual activities and achievements of a culture spreading over thousands of years. And the effort cannot be said to have ceased. Language changes ; customs and ways of life are modified by the force of circumstances and environment ; but passage of time brings about little change in the soul-expression of a culture, if in its depth there is the seed of some evolving truth fundamental to human nature. The thoughts of the Vedic seers concerning the problems of inner life and the mysteries of the world of Becoming and the world of Spirit, their unquenchable yearning for the Beyond which they called 'the realm of inexhaustible Light, where there is no fear of death and decay', speak of that inner urge of self-exceeding which lies at the root of all life-movements of man. The urge is as old as Life ; if its forms have changed, as forms naturally do, its spirit is the same today as it was ages ago. It is only a change of idiom in mystical expression, due to a change of social context, and a shifting of the psychological approach to Reality that has made the sayings of the ancient seers partly obscure to us. The distance in time has created a mist which blurs our vision and distorts our judgement. But we may hope that much of the mist can be cleared if we approach the problem of interpretation with a penetrative insight, true to the spiritual tradition of the land, and a sound historical sense that can discover the motive of a great thought-movement covering immense stretches in space and time and arrange its events in accordance with the rhythm inherent in it.

Naturally, in our imagination rises the towering figure of Vyāsa 'of vast comprehension' to whom tradition ascribes the collection and editing not only of the Vedic hymns, but of the whole mass of Ārya thought. Vyāsa, whether we see in him a myth or a vision, cannot be confined to a definite period ; he is a whole perspective that widens with the flow of time. He is, as tradition again insists, the immortal spirit of Bhārata (India) looking from the snow-heights to the dawns of the distant future. His gathering of the past in his Vedic and Paurāṇic collections and his portrayal of the present in his *Mahābhārata* are all achievements in an epic style. And we can understand neither the spirit of Bhārata, nor its expression in the Vedas, if the epic vision of a Vyāsa does not inspire us, because the Vedas represent the same epic grandeur of Spirit that we find in the *Mahābhārata* the poem, or in the life and culture of the land of its origin.

THE NATURE OF VEDIC LITERATURE

Tradition divides the Vedic literature into four sections, viz. Mantra-saṁhitā, Brāhmaṇa, Āraṇyaka, and Upaniṣad. An older division is into Mantra and Brāhmaṇa, where Mantra forms the original body of literature of which Brāhmaṇa is the exposition. Āraṇyaka and Upaniṣad in this case form a part of Brāhmaṇa. From the point of view of a change in the mode of expression (and not assuming a rigid sequence in time), the literature that began with Mantra, naturally ends with Upaniṣad. Of the whole of this literature, the part that contains the Upaniṣads is comparatively less obscure, because their language is less symbolical, while the approach is more psychological and intellectual. A symbol is the sensuous expression of a mystical experience ; and unless we have that quickness of mind which can seize an object of sense and create a dreamland around it, suggestive of something elusively transcendent, symbolism usually falls flat. It requires an atmosphere quite different from that of rationalism. While rationalism seeks to translate the concrete into the abstract, symbolism as an art tries to transform the abstract of the intuition into concrete images. The Ārya literature began with symbolism in the Mantra-saṁhitās and gradually drifted towards rationalism. The Upaniṣads mark the period of transition, and their rationalistic bias makes them more intelligible to the modern mind, which apparently mistakes them for productions of maturer thought. Symbolism was pushed into the background, though it could not be killed, and found expression in other fields of literary activity. But a major link with the past was thus broken ; and the interpretation of the ancient symbols becomes an impossible task, unless we can create again the subjective atmosphere in which they were born.

The Brāhmaṇas and the Āraṇyakas, being avowedly expositions of the Mantra cult, are obviously less obscure than the Mantras ; but as the atmosphere of symbolism still clings to them, they are less intelligible than the Upaniṣads. The crux of the problem of interpretation, of course, lies with the Mantras. The language is archaic ; but it must be admitted that it is not so archaic as to make it altogether different from classical Sanskrit. The syntax is simpler, and the number of words common to both forms of the language is very high. What we have often to wrestle with is not the form of a word, or even its surface-meaning, but the suggestion that lies behind it. After all, we must remember that here we are dealing with a world of thought created by mystic experiences. And once we admit that, we must equip ourselves with other canons of interpretation than mere intellectual ones, and keep ourselves free from being obsessed by the evolutionary hypothesis which can arrange forms in time but cannot explain the timeless spirit that inspires the forms.

MANTRA AND BRAHMAṆA

The earliest interpretation of the Vedic *mantras* we find in the Brāhmaṇas; but 'the words rising from the depths' (*ninyā vacāṁsi, Ṛ.V.*, IV.3.16), as the *mantras* are called by the Vedas themselves, have not been adequately handled by the Brāhmaṇical expositions. The Brāhmaṇas were not concerned with giving systematically an esoteric interpretation of the Saṁhitās. Technically, they can be regarded as *karma-mīmāṁsā*, and not as *Brahma-mīmāṁsā*, that is to say, authoritative dissertations on ritual practice and not on spiritual knowledge. The connection of the Vedic *mantras* with rituals is very deep. The chief aim of the Brāhmaṇas is to give a clear and connected account of the rituals, with occasional exegetical comments, where it is assumed that the listeners are already perfectly familiar with the atmosphere in which these rituals arose. Every detail of a ritual has to be accompanied by a *mantra*; and so the Brāhmaṇas have quoted extensively from the Saṁhitās, and in many cases have given what may be called a paraphrase of the *mantras* without attempting any kind of esoteric interpretation. Perhaps, this was thought unnecessary, and was supposed to belong rather to the *adhyātma* than to the *adhiyajña* point of view with which the Brāhmaṇas were more directly concerned.[1] So it was enough for them to explain incidentally the connection of the *mantras* with the rites and stop there. Though the *mantras* were evidently composed in a ritualistic atmosphere, it cannot be claimed that each and every *mantra* of the Saṁhitās has always a necessary reference to some rite. Of course, the ritualists of later days have insisted upon the dogma that 'the sole import of the *mantras* lies in an urge to ritualistic action alone', and have tried to connect every *mantra* with a rite. But, naturally, this could not be done with a *tour de force*, as in many cases the import of the *mantras* had no direct reference to the rites to which they were applied. In the recital of the *śastras* or the laudatory hymns, the Brāhmaṇical injunction can govern the act of recitation alone, but, obviously, it cannot prevent the inspired thought from diving deep into the esoteric meaning (*upaniṣad, rahasyam*) of the Word; and surely it cannot be its intention to do so.[2]

[1] In commenting upon *Ṛg-Veda*, X.71.5, Yāska remarks: 'It speaks of the *meaning* as being the flower and the fruit of the Word. Exoterically, knowledge of the rituals and of the gods are respectively the flower and the fruit; but esoterically, the knowledge of the gods and of the Self are the flower and the fruit of the Word' (*Nirukta*, I.20). Nothing could express more clearly the double relation that the *mantras* bear to *jñāna* and *karma*.

[2] The *Ṛg-Veda* repeatedly draws attention to the esoteric meaning of the *mantras*: cp. I.164.39; IV.3.16; VIII.100.10; X.71.3, 4, 5; X.114.8; X.125.7; etc. The *Nirukta* insists upon a thorough knowledge of the secret of the Vedas (I.18). The *Gopatha Brāhmaṇa*, while fully defining the scope of the Vedas, speaks expressly of their *rahasyam* (I.2.10).

KARMA AND JÑĀNA NOT CONTRADICTORY

In the Brāhmaṇas, the Āraṇyakas, and the older prose Upaniṣads which are directly connected with the Brāhmaṇas, there are many suggestions of a symbolic nature which are indispensable aids for understanding the secret meaning of the Mantra-saṁhitās. It is an undeniable fact that the cleavage between the *jñāna-kāṇḍa* (knowledge section) and the *karma-kāṇḍa* (ritual section), which was a creation of a later intellectual age, did not exist in the Vedic period. The broad dictum of the *Gītā* that 'all actions (*karma*), without an exception, culminate in knowledge (*jñāna*)' (IV, 33) was literally true with the Vedic *ṛṣis*. But there knowledge is to be taken not in the sense of philosophical reason or intellectual co-ordination of experiences, but in the sense of spiritual realization which aims at an inner soul-experience of illumined consciousness. This state of illumination is what the ancient *ṛṣis* called *svar* or the realm of Light, which popular mind translated into the image of a heaven. The heaven of popular imagination is an extension or sublimation of sense-experiences, and as such it has been combated in later ages by the concept of liberation (*mokṣa*). But in the mind of the Vedic seers, *svar* was an actual inner illumination to be realized here on earth, and was not fundamentally different from *mokṣa,* though it did not distinctly suggest the philosophical postulates connoted by the latter term. *Svar* can be attained by *dhī*, which the *Nighaṇṭu* explains both as *karma* or action and *prajñā* or knowledge ; and this is extremely significant. Realization through rituals (*dravya-yajña*) and realization through knowledge (*jñāna-yajña*) are not mutually contradictory ; and the concepts of *svar* and *mokṣa* also do not clash. At least such was the position in the Vedic age, and the basic implication of this idea continues to the present day in various philosophical doctrines and spiritual practices, because it has its roots in spiritual psychology.

It is important to remember this fusion of *jñāna* and *karma* in Vedic thought. A clear proof of this lies in the composition of the *Śukla Yajur-Veda*, the last chapter of which is an Upaniṣad. *Īśa* is the only Upaniṣad which has been included in the Saṁhitā-portion of the Vedas. *Yajur-Veda* is essentially the Veda of rituals. To end this Veda with an Upaniṣad is extremely significant. This little Upaniṣad of only eighteen verses is unsurpassed in the whole of Vedic literature for the deep and wide spirit of synthesis that it breathes. To light this lamp of supreme knowledge at the end of the Veda of rituals seems to be an illuminating commentary on the dictum of the *Gītā* mentioned before. We might remember in this connection the tradition about Yājñavalkya to whom, it is said, the *Śukla Yajur-Veda* was revealed. In Yājñavalkya, as in Vyāsa, we have another grand synthesis of Ārya thought. Ritualism found its true meaning in

him; and symbolically speaking, he may be said to have rediscovered the secret of transforming the 'black' action into 'white' through the principle of non-attachment (*nirlepa*);[3] and spiritual intuition also reached its sublime height in his Upaniṣadic teachings which focussed into a spotlight an ancient way of Vedic thought.[4] It has since then dominated the subsequent development of Ārya philosophy, and is still regarded as the highest peak to which spiritual wisdom can soar.

VĀC OR CREATIVE WORD

Tradition (*aitihya*), which may forget or distort facts, is nevertheless a form of racial memory which faithfully preserves the psychological atmosphere in which it came into being. It becomes an aid to a construction of a history of thought, if with a penetrative insight and logical imagination we can discover the *a priori* scheme from which the thought-movement gathered its life-impulse. The Yājñavalkya-tradition is important in this respect; it clearly suggests the continuous existence of an esoteric interpretation of the Vedic cult. And this is not against the spirit of the *mantras*. The 'words rising from the depths', a Vedic seer would say, have always a transcendental reference, though they have necessarily mental and verbal forms.[5] The transcendent principle is Vāc, the creative Word, 'who covers the diverse poises of the expanding consciousness, as the thousand vastnesses of the spirit manifest themselves in a thousand ways'.[6] This 'Divine Word has been revealed by the Light-powers'.[7] 'She, the White Deer, shines in the highest Void in an array of thousand syllables'[8] which appear as 'flame-songs in the immutable empyrean in whose depths are seated the universal Powers of Illumination'.[9] She is again 'established in the inner being as an ecstasy of delight ruling like a queen over the Light-powers'.[10] It is not for all to see or hear her; it is rarely that 'she would reveal her body to some one, like a beautifully-robed yearning wife to her husband'.[11] Perhaps nobody has ever reached her supreme heights;[12] and yet 'whoever has not known her abode of Void, what will he do with a flame-song?'[13] But Vāc is as much a human creation as she is a divine

[3] *I.U.*, 2.
[4] The *Nāsadīya-sūkta* (*Ṛ.V.*, X.129) and the conception of the Night belonging to Varuṇa were the seeds of the later philosophy of transcendentalism developed from the Upaniṣads.
[5] *Ṛ.V.*, IV.3.16.
[6] *Ibid.*, X.114.8. She is the Creative Word because 'it is She who sweeps on as a tempest while putting forth all existences' (X.125.8).
[7] *Ibid.*, VIII.100.11.
[8] *Ibid.*, I.164.41.
[9] *Ibid.*, I.164.39.
[10] *Ibid.*, VIII.100.10.
[11] *Ibid.*, X.71.4.
[12] *Ibid.*, VIII.100.10.
[13] *Ibid.*, I.164.39.

manifestation: 'It is the contemplative who again create the Word through the agency of the mind',[14] as 'there are things which are fashioned by the heart, and speed beyond the ranges of the mind'.[15]

SIGNIFICANCE OF MĪMĀṀSĀ

Thus the mind as an aspirant is the spearhead of the expanding consciousness of the Vast (*brahma*) pressing towards the supreme expression of Vāc; and its creations are the *mantras* which are inspired by the vision of the primal Word. '*Mantras* are products of spiritual mentation', says Yāska.[16] And from the same root is derived another word '*mīmāṁsā*', meaning 'an intensive exercise of the mind', 'an investigation' (*jijñāsā*).[17] The word, as it is used in the Brāhmaṇas and the Upaniṣads, implies a discussion about some ritual practice in the former and about some spiritual concept in the latter. While *mantra* is the inspired utterance, *mīmāṁsā*, especially in its Upaniṣadic context, is the application of reason for a better grasping of the meaning of the concept underlying it. The whole of the Upaniṣadic literature breathes this spirit of *mīmāṁsā* or spiritual reason diving deep into the things of the Beyond and coming back with radiances of inspired thought, though like the Brāhmaṇas, they too do not attempt a systematic interpretation of the Mantra-saṁhitās.

The word '*mīmāṁsā*', which is of more frequent occurrence in the Brāhmaṇas than in the Upaniṣads,[18] does not, however, imply a strictly logical process. It is more of the nature of a co-ordination of spiritual experiences or of thoughts having an inner certitude, and is thus more akin to the spiritual practice of *manana* than to the logical procedure of *tarka*. And this is quite in keeping with the prevalent spirit of the Mantra cult. The mind there works, as we have already seen, more by an illumination derived from within than by ratiocination dependent on objective data. If we carefully study the psychology of spiritual expression (*vāc*), as it has been revealed in numerous Vedic *mantras*, which, with a rich array of technical terms, have delicately portrayed the mind's venture into the Unknown, we have no doubt left as to the antiquity of *mīmāṁsā* as a form of intense mentation creating a tradition of mystic knowledge which must have been

[14] *Ibid.*, X.71.2. The mind in the Veda is not the sense-mind as understood by later philosophies. It is the distinctive spiritual principle in man described variously in the Upaniṣads as *yajamāna* or the aspirant (*Pra. U.*, IV.4), *daivaṁ cakṣuḥ* or the divine eye (*Chā. U.*, VIII.12.5), *anantam* or the Infinity (*Bṛ. U.*, III.1.9), and *brahma* or the consciousness of the Vast (*Bṛ. U.*, IV.1.6), etc. It is best described as 'the gate-keeper of the realm of Light'.

[15] *Ṛ.V.*, X.71.8.

[16] *Nirukta*, VII.12.

[17] *Vārttika* on *Pāṇini*, III.1.6.

[18] The word and its derivatives occur only four times in the Upaniṣads and in connection with the three important concepts of Ātman, Brahman, and Ānanda. The passages show the esoteric nature of the practice very clearly. See *Tai. U.*, II.8.1; *Chā. U.*, V.11.1; *Bṛ. U.*, I.4.16; *Ke. U.*, II.1.

orally handed down from father to son or from teacher to disciple.[19] Taking the cue from a later tradition, we may construct a psychological scheme of the growth of *mīmāṁsā*, originally from what is technically known as Śruti, through the intermediary stage of Smṛti, and finally passing into the logical system of *tarka*.[20] There is reason to believe that true to the intuitional character of the Vedic thought, early Mīmāṁsā never took the last step of logical reasoning until it was compelled to do so in self-defence, being challenged by other systems of Ārya thought, which did not strictly belong to the Vedic school.

PARALLEL STREAMS OF FAITH AND REASON

The spiritual cult that we meet with in the Vedic literature is a form of deism inspired by faith (*śraddhā*). Faith is an original characteristic of the human mind going beyond the senses and yet intuitively sensing an object that belongs to a higher order of reality. Contrasted with faith, an equally important faculty is reason, which was called by the Vedic seers *oha*, and later on came to be known as *tarka*. Spiritual reason is, in its essence, introspective: if faith leads one to the gods (*devas*), reason leads to the Self (Ātman). All realizations, whether of the gods or of the Self, are experiences of the supernormal; the yearning for the one or the other is determined by a natural bent of the spirit.

These two original trends of the human mind run parallel throughout the whole course of the development of Ārya spiritual thought. The rationalists, who were the authors of all the philosophical systems of ancient India except the two Mīmāṁsās, took their stand on what was called the philosophical reason (*tarka*), as distinguished from the spiritual reason (*mīmāṁsā*) of the intuitionists. Their analytical approach to reality and their critical attitude were like a challenge to the Mīmāṁsakas who had to support faith by reason to make their position precise and unassailable.

But the rationalists were as much steeped in the spirit of mysticism as the intuitionists. Their vision of Reality and their scheme of spiritual psychology come from a source where the two original movements of the mind still remain fused in a global conception of Truth. The ideas of

[19] The 'full transmission of spiritual power from father to son' (*pitā-putrīyaṁ sampradānam*) has been graphically described in the *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad* (II.15), which forms interesting reading in this connection. The heritage includes the well-known fivefold means of the divine realization, the esoteric practices together with the aspirations and the vicissitudes of life. It is a grand vision of the uninterrupted flow of life towards its final goal of total becoming.

[20] The psychological basis for this division is to be found in the scheme of the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (III.2-6) where two levels of consciousness beyond the mind are described. According to this scheme, *tarka* would be the product of *manas*, Smṛti of *vijñāna*, and Śruti of *ānanda*. And this bears an exact parallel to the ancient triad of *manas*, *manīṣā*, and *hṛd* mentioned in the *Ṛg-Veda* (I.61.2), which forms one of the foundations of the Upaniṣadic mystic philosophy.

being (*sat*) and non-being (*asat*), which represent the two ultimates to which intuitionism and rationalism can aspire, are not sharply contrasted in the *Ṛg-Veda*: the 'luminous day' of Mitra and the 'dark night' of Varuṇa are the biune aspects of the same Reality. The vastness (*brahma*) and the vigour (*kṣatra*) of the Spirit are both to be quickened to win the Light ;[21] and one should neither allow faith to degenerate into the drowsiness of the soul (*nidrā*), nor reason to lose itself in the maze of speculation (*jalpi*).[22]

PŪRVA-MĪMĀṀSĀ AND UTTARA-MĪMĀṀSĀ

In the sphere of philosophy, however, *tarka* and *mīmāṁsā* have chalked out two divergent paths, though the aim of spiritual realization common to both has kept the door of mutual influence open. In ascertaining the nature of Reality, the Mīmāṁsaka's final authority is the revealed Word (Śruti); his powers of reason are applied to a co-ordination of scriptural statements as can be seen from the general scheme of the two Mīmāṁsā-Sūtras. Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā is believed to be the earliest of philosophical Sūtras, but it is the least polemical in character. The only philosophical problem of any interest that it discusses is the theory of eternality and non-personal origination of the Word, and even there it takes up the position of traditional self-defence. Contrary to this, Uttara-Mīmāṁsā, which in its present form is supposed to be the youngest of the authoritative Sūtras, takes upon itself the task of refuting almost all the philosophical systems prevalent in India. So, viewed from a historical standpoint, the schools of rationalism, with their long course of vigorous development, appear embedded between the parentheses of the two schools of Mīmāṁsās. This again may be looked upon as a triumph for the Vedic thought, for Uttara-Mīmāṁsā, which is traditionally regarded as embodying the crowning achievements of the Vedic spiritual quest, has accommodated, in course of ages, in its enigmatic aphorisms, almost all shades of philosophical opinions, and is still the source of inspiration for new ventures in the field of mysticism.

But just as the Brāhmaṇas, the representatives of the system of Smṛti (if we take that term in its widest and deepest sense), moved about in the atmosphere of Śruti and yet did not attempt an esoteric interpretation of the sacred texts, so the Mīmāṁsās too were not directly concerned with an exposition of the Mantra-saṁhitās though they tried to support with philosophical reason (*tarka*) some of the assumptions and concepts suggested by the Vedic cult. Of course, the Mīmāṁsās contain the quintessence of the Vedic philosophy, and they look upon the Vedas together with the Brāhmaṇas as revealed scriptures ; but apparently the Mantra-saṁhitās have

[21] *R.V.*, VIII.35.16-17.
[22] *Ibid.*, VIII.48.14.

been almost completely left out from the scope of their exegetical labours. Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā is known as Karma- or Dharma-Mīmāṁsā and as such as a guide in spiritual practice. The aim of this practice is no doubt the realization of a spiritual state, but the means adopted for attaining the end is material. The cult it deals with is extremely old, and must have developed, as ritualistic practices do, from a simple action-pattern as an expression of some idea-force. But this idea-force we find nowhere delineated in the Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā, and so we are left quite in the dark about the working of the spiritual mind that inspired these practices. The Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā is not only silent on this point, but its ultra-ritualistic attitude has so completely severed the connection between mind and action that ritualism has been reduced to a dead mechanical cult which can only hope to live by creating a sense of crude and amorphous mysticism. As an evil consequence of this, even in India, a tradition has grown which has consigned the whole of the ancient Mantra cult to the limbo of unillumined occultism ; and this has created in the modern mind a prejudice which throws at the very outset any attempt at Vedic exegesis off the track.

We may turn to the Uttara-Mīmāṁsā for a clue to the nature of the idea that is behind the action. This Mīmāṁsā deals with what is traditionally known as the *jñāna-kāṇḍa* or the body of spiritual knowledge taught by the Vedas. Its object of enquiry is the nature of Brahman, an old Vedic word on a par with the idea of *svar*, but having a more subjective emphasis. Taken as a whole, the Uttara-Mīmāṁsā would seem to give a fair picture of the philosophic mind of the Vedic seers and thus supply us with a basis for working up an esoteric interpretation of the Mantra-saṁhitā. But modern scholarship would object to this on the ground that the Sūtras, apparently dealing with the Upaniṣadic texts, represent a later, and so a more developed, form of thought than can be found in the Saṁhitās, and hence they cannot be taken as sure guides for the interpretation of the *mantras*. We shall have occasion to touch upon the fallacy of this assumption ; but, nevertheless, it cannot be denied that the Uttara-Mīmāṁsā, being really framed on the model of *tarka*, is indeed farther from the spirit of the Brāhmaṇic *mīmāṁsā*, and it was certainly not designed to serve as a commentary on the Mantra cult though it is spiritually affiliated to it.

THE VEDĀṄGAS AND LATER COMMENTARIES

From the materials in hand, we can have an idea of the interpretation that was put upon the *mantras* by their guardians, the ritualists. For the Vedic age, we have the earliest exposition by them in the Brāhmaṇas ; but, as we have seen, it is often nothing but a simple paraphrase set in a ritual context, which is not only inadequate, but in some cases misleading. Next

comes the age of the Vedāṅgas, each of which must have taken the *mantra* as a symbol of power and developed forms of mystical practices based on its different aspects. Among them, the school of etymology (*nirukta*), giving its thought to the meaning of words, is naturally more concerned with the task of verbal interpretation. Yāska, the last of the Nairuktas, has paraphrased several hundreds of *mantras* when commenting upon the ancient Vedic lexicon, the *Nighaṇṭu*. His interpretation, though generally following the line of the ritualists, is sometimes illumined by remarks which throw much light on the mystery of the Vedas. Besides, he speaks of schools of interpretation which anticipate some of the theories advanced by modern scholars. About two thousand years after Yāska, we have the great medieval commentator Sāyaṇa, whose school gave the last extant complete interpretation of the Vedas and the Brāhmaṇas in a systematic way. That Sāyaṇa has been following a continuous tradition of Vedic exegesis, beginning from the time of Yāska, has been established by the discovery, in recent times, of the works of several pre-Sāyaṇa commentators. Sāyaṇa's labours, however, have given a compactness to a tradition whose plausibility has not been without influence even on the minds of those trying to make a scientific approach to the problem of Vedic interpretation.

From the age of the Brāhmaṇas to that of Sāyaṇa, the pattern of ritualistic interpretation has not much changed. Rather it has stiffened with the times. Through the meticulous details of rituals, of which the *mantras* are only made as pretexts in the Brāhmaṇas, we still have a glimpse of the blue in the innumerable myths and aphorisms strewn throughout the texts. Shorn of these symbols and images, ritualism as represented by the Sūtra literature appears bald, though there is a justification for this in view of the practical necessity from which this literature rose.

When the medieval commentators set about to interpret the Mantra texts, inspired no doubt by the dictum of the ancient Mīmāṁsakas which declared that 'to know the meaning of the *mantras* is to reap the full benefit from them',[23] the influence of ritualism was so strong upon them that they were quite content with giving a paraphrase of the *mantras* in the Brāhmaṇic fashion without going deeper into their mysteries. Their paraphrase is more anaemic than that by the Brāhmaṇas; for these, by their lively description of the rituals illumined by mystic imagery, at least created a spiritual setting for the *mantras*, which the commentators have completely

[23] Quoted by Yāska in the *Nirukta*, I.18, where he further strengthens his position by quoting from the *Ṛg-Veda*. The ritual is always a conscious means to an end, the *mantra* being a medium for the will. In the Brāhmaṇas, we repeatedly find the phrase *ya evaṁ veda* (he who knows thus). That a physical rite could have a wholly spiritual counterpart is an ancient tradition continued in the Tāntric rituals. The *mantra* there becomes a means of introversion; and this is how a Vedic *sūkta* would be changed into a *nivid* or 'the knowledge of the depth' which can be further compressed into a 'seed-form' (*bīja*).

ignored. Both the Sūtrakāras and the commentators supplemented the labours of the Brāhmaṇas: the former systematized the procedure of the rituals, while the latter filled the gaps left in the interpretation of the *mantras*. The task of the Sūtrakāras was a mechanical one, which they have done in a competent way; but the commentators, depriving themselves of the mystic imagination of the Brāhmaṇas, have killed the spirit of the *mantras* and left them open to the charge of being a string of words little better than a magical formula and having no deeper meaning than what appears on the surface.

The ritualists, as guardians of the Mantra cult, have carefully preserved the Mantra texts from oblivion, and one cannot be too grateful to them for this. If they have failed to preserve the original mystic tradition within their school and have allowed it to dissipate itself into other channels, yet they would not object to a deeper spiritual interpretation put on the *mantras*. The appendix to the *Nirukta* demonstrates this clearly in the case of a few *mantras*, and Yāska recognizes this principle in his equation of gods with Self;[24] and the medieval commentators, though staunch ritualists, have freely accepted, in some cases, the possibility of other interpretations than what they offer.

BASIS FOR THE INTERPRETATION OF THE MANTRAS

The difficulty of Vedic interpretation on traditional lines then lies in this. We have a text of the *mantras* scrupulously preserved by the ritualists; but their earliest exposition, as we find it in the Brāhmaṇas, provides with no running commentary on the text, though it deals with their subject-matter from the standpoint of theory and practice alike. The Mīmāṁsās based on the Brāhmaṇas are an attempt at systematization of rites and thoughts embodied in them, but without having any direct reference to the Saṁhitās. The preservation of the texts for thousands of years through an oral tradition, which has continued even to the present day, is a wonderful feat of memory sustained by a spiritual fervour unparalleled in its tenacity. The whole thing has created an atmosphere of faith in which a supersensuous realism has been born, where a truth is rather felt by intuition than grasped by reason. Throughout the Saṁhitās and the Brāhmaṇas expressions freely occur which are like luminous pointers to the occult and the mystic; and even today, the man of faith would naively echo Yāska's significant remark: 'The seers were men who had the direct experience of the basic Reality.'[25] To build a bridge, spanning the present and the past, the age of reason and the age of intuition, does not seem to be an impossible task

[24] *Nirukta*, VII.4; I.20.
[25] *Ibid.*, I.20.

if heed is paid to the hints that have been thrown out in the way, because, though there is a gap in literary record, there has been absolutely no gap in the spiritual adventure and the consequent transmission of spiritual tradition.

The ritualists have postulated two theories to uphold the authority of the Vedas: the eternality of the Word and its non-personal origination. Both of them are common assumptions of all revealed religions, although the second one is a little different from its commonly accepted form in stating that the Veda is not the Word of God, but the Word itself. These two postulates of faith, based on some mystic experiences lying at the root of the whole of the Mantra cult, have not directly helped the Vedicist to give a rational interpretation of the *mantras*, but indirectly they are suggestive of the standpoint from which an approach to such an interpretation is to be made. In dealing with the Word, as the Vedicist would say, we are dealing with a phenomenon which transcends the bounds of normal experience. The human speech translating the mystic experience of the Word is, at its best, three steps removed from the original impact, declares a Vedic seer ;[26] and to understand its true import, 'we must follow the track of its course through "sacrifice" till we find it embedded in the hearts of the seers', declares another *ṛṣi*.[27] This is the demand of faith on reason ; and she is fully justified in it, because where words are definitely asserted to be an attempt at expressing the ineffable, an interpretation cannot be said to be rational unless it has acquired the right to speak by 'reliving the scene'.

The problem of Vedic exegesis then is the problem of reviving the spirit and re-creating the inner experience of the atmosphere in which the *mantras* took shape. Mere intellectual ingenuity and superficial judgement will not help us, because here we are dealing with things of the spirit where an interpretation can hope to be true only when understanding has come through spiritual communion and insight. We shall have to take our stand on the two postulates of faith advanced by the ritualists, taking them in a slightly different form: instead of the eternality and the non-personal origination of the Word, we shall have to speak of the eternality and the non-personal character of Truth. It may be debatable whether material history is the expression of an original Idea ; but it is an indubitable fact that spiritual history is always so. 'It is of the One Existence that yearning hearts speak in diverse ways', has said a Vedic seer ;[28] and this is true not only in an abstract way, but in a concrete form also. Like the mystic

[26] *Ṛ.V.*, I.164.45. The three higher steps have been fully described by the grammarians and have been adopted by the philosophy of the Tantras.
[27] *Ibid.*, X.71.3.
[28] *Ibid.*, I.164.46.

aśvattha tree 'with its root above and the branches below', the Vedic tradition, in a broad sense, stands at the very source of almost all forms of Indian spiritual cults. And the interpretation of this tradition can be attempted with best results if we do not place the Vedas on the isolated heights of the past, but with a total vision of the present retrace our steps to the roots discovering, with a penetrating insight, the links at every step. But this movement in breadth must be supplemented by a movement in depth. One has to discover the master-idea that has been behind this historical development. And here, it is the Spirit that must question the Spirit in that stillness of 'the ocean where the womb of the Word lies sunk in the depths of the Waters'.[29]

And, in this connection, nothing can be more illuminating than the following remarks of Yāska in his epilogue to the *Nirukta*: 'Concerning the *mantras*, none can claim to have perceived their truths if one is not a seer and a spiritual energizer. . . . When seers passed beyond, men asked the gods, "Who are going to be seers for us?" To them the gods gave reason as the seer. And hence, whatever one speaks with reason, *following the track of the Word,* becomes as good as the utterance of a seer. . . . This knowledge is a form of revealed and reasoned illumination ; its farthest end is to be realized by spiritual energizing.'[30]

VIEWS OF WESTERN INDOLOGISTS

In modern times, a new school of Vedic interpretation has been established by the labours of the western Indologists, who claim to have approached the subject in a rational and scientific spirit. There is a striking difference between the old Indian rationalists and these of the new age. While the former were frankly positivists in matters supersensual, the positivism of the latter is confined to the world of senses alone. We have nowhere any clear account of the philosophy of the ancient *devanids* (deniers of gods), but it can safely be inferred that in later ages they became the forerunners of the metaphysical rationalists of India. Their two chief characteristics are: first, a faith in a supra-sensible Truth comparable to a hypothesis made by the scientist, and secondly, the laying down of a definite path to be followed to attain that Truth. The rationalists are here in complete agreement with the intuitionists: the difference between the two is only in forms of practical faith, but not in its essence ; and in the supreme heights, rationalism naturally passes into intuitionism. The quarrel is rather between an initial objectivism and subjectivism. The paths, of course, then become divergent, and not the aims. But the modern

[29] *Ibid.*, X.125.7.
[30] *Nirukta*, XIII.12, 13.

rationalists have taken up quite a different position. Firstly, in their so-called scientific study of the Vedas, they have accepted the ancient postulates of interpretation only in part, just as much as would suit their own hypotheses; and secondly, they have started with a doubt about the rationality and ultimate value of the Vedic thought and practice.

And like all interpreters, they have their own postulates to work with. One of their major postulates is the Theory of Evolution, which from its first application to the world of life has spread to the world of mind also. The principle of the development of a structure from a simple and indefinite to a complex and definite form, they would say, can surely be applied to the field of human culture. Even if religion be a primal instinct in man, its growth bears a definite relation to the growth of culture. Primitive religion is marked by two characteristics: animism in religious consciousness and magic in religious practice. As reason is not yet developed in the primitive man, he has a poor conception of either the universal or the unity: hence his religion starts with polytheism which develops finally into monotheism. Deification of nature; conciliation of her powers by offerings, rites, and incantations; a belief in a world peopled with invisible beings, whom one tries to soothe or win over by various occult means—these are the main features of primitive religion. The Vedic religion, though not quite primitive, is yet not very far from being so. The literary record of this religion shows a clear course of gradual development from the Devavāda of the Vedas to the Brahmavāda of the Upaniṣads. But as the moral sense of the *ṛṣis* was never very strong, their religious consciousness found its final expression not in any distinct form of monotheism, but in bewildering aberrations of pantheism. In religious practice too, the cult of sacrifice found in the Vedas is lower in aim and status than the cult of introspection and meditation found in the Upaniṣads.

The task of interpretation becomes difficult by the obscurity of the language. The indigenous commentators are not very reliable guides, as their explanations are often unsystematic and fanciful. One would have despaired of finding the clue to correct interpretation of the *mantras,* if comparative philology had not come to the rescue. A comparative study of the language, religion, mythology, and manners of the different branches of the Aryan race helps us to reconstruct and present in a true light a picture of the Vedic religion which is no better than the religions of the half-civilized races found all over the world.

A distinctive feature of this religion is what may be called Naturalism or worship of Nature, whose roots lie in some fundamental urges of life. Sun and rain, which stand for an increase of life-force, rule over two great biological factors of man's hunger for sex and for food. Sun and rain are

the gifts of the Sky-gods; and religion has its origin in the seeking of the favours of these Powers, so that a continuous satisfaction of the primal life-urges may be assured. So, all incantations are nothing but varied forms of sun-spells and rain-spells, and all cults are simply fertility cults.

The theories of Evolution and Naturalism are then the two main postulates of the western school of Vedic interpretation. A tradition has slowly grown up on their basis exercising a deep influence on the Vedic scholars of India also. Naturalism has given rise to some speculations, especially in India, giving an astronomical, meteorological, and even geological interpretation of some of the *mantras*. The interpretations are ingenious and interesting, but they are not comprehensive enough to explain a whole cult; at best they point only to the occasions of the composition of these *mantras*, but do not clarify the motive for the selection of these occasions which might have an altogether different context.

REACTIONS TO WESTERN VIEWS

A conspicuous result of the western interpretation has been a revival of interest in Vedic studies in India, which expressed itself in an attitude of self-defence so common in the old Mīmāṁsakas. Of course, for political reasons such an attitude could not be countenanced by the official seats of learning which modelled their Vedic researches exactly on the western lines. But an outlook free from foreign influence could be met with outside the academic circle in the labours of the laymen inspired by a national spirit and a close adherence to the tradition of faith and mystic insight.

This new impetus again has taken two courses, one conservative and the other critical. The conservative movement is mainly based on the ritualistic tradition of Sāyaṇa and has done good work in popularizing the Vedic thought through the medium of the different provincial languages. It has supplemented Sāyaṇa's dry ritualism by introducing an element of devotion to gods which has always been a living source of inspiration in Ārya religion. But to unfold the mystery of the Vedic gods which has been overlaid with Paurāṇic and Tāntric traditions, a mere effusion of faith and devotion is not sufficient; it must be sobered and strengthened by rational mysticism.

The critical movement, which does not bind itself to the interpretation of Sāyaṇa and yet seeks to build on reason and mystic faith, is represented by two important schools—the schools of the Ārya Samāj and of Pondicherry. The aim of both the schools is to steer clear of the old Indian conservatism and the new foreign rationalism and to make the Vedic cult consonant with a way of life or of mystic thought. And this is of course a move in the right direction; for, if the gap left in Vedic interpretation by the

ritualists be not filled up, the authority of the Vedas, which tradition declares to be the guiding force in Hindu spirituality, becomes an empty phrase. If the standpoint taken by the modern rationalists is true, then the faith in the Vedas is nothing but an outworn piece of idle superstition. But before accepting this position, one has every right to put it to a thorough test to see if it is really unassailable. The schools of the Ārya Samāj and Pondicherry have taken up the challenge of the western school; and their labours, especially of the latter which has brought to bear on the subject the principles of a spiritual depth-psychology, will always be regarded as opening a new chapter in Indian Vedic interpretation.

COMPETENCE OF THE WESTERNERS TO INTERPRET THE VEDAS

Now we may turn to a brief analysis of the postulates of the western school to see how far they can be taken as aids in Vedic studies.

Before judging the merits of these postulates, we have to discuss in the old Indian fashion a psychological problem, the problem of competence (*adhikāra*). Interpretation always presupposes a spiritual communion between the interpreter and the object he seeks to interpret. This becomes imperative when one seeks to interpret a culture, a way of thought, or a thing of the Spirit. A process of saturation, resulting in a *participation mystique*, must set in before the eyes are ready to see and the mind to grasp. The Europeans and the Indians differ in so many respects in their outlook on life that it often becomes impossible for a European to enter into the spirit of secret India, which still remains unapproachable and baffling to him. An overweening self-consciousness in matters of religion makes a man uncharitable, if not hostile, towards other forms of faith, especially if they are hedged round by apparently unmeaning rituals. A gap created by distance in time and space as well as difference in ways of life and thought, a superciliousness born of rapid and amazing achievements in science, a pride in economic and political superiority, and an all-too-human weakness of making hasty generalizations—all these factors have not only helped the European mind to be prejudiced against Indian culture, but have also allowed it to drift into speculations which have little bearing on India's real or inner life.

The judgement passed by western scholars on India's social consciousness becomes extremely misleading when it touches her religion. The cult of religion culminates in mystic experience, which again is an *a priori* fact of life. Not to have a mystic touch in one's soul and yet to think oneself qualified to interpret the scriptures of any faith, including one's own, is a piece of presumption which scientific scrupulosity should not have allowed. And yet this has been the case with Vedic interpretation!

In judging a religion, it is not easy to avoid comparing it with one's own and being affected with a subconscious prejudice against it. The European looks upon monotheism as the last grand achievement of the human soul, and is uncompromising towards any type of faith which does not strictly conform to his own ideal. He allows himself to be deceived by forms, and does not care to look behind them. It is the unconscious working of the theological dogma that decides the issue, and not a clear and unbiased vision inspired by scientific exactitude.

INTEGRAL VISION OF ONE AND MANY

Vedic gods are to the western mind a mystery, simply because they are gods and not a God. The logical mind, playing with the idolum of numbers, here creates an antithesis between one and many which is not, however, an inevitable psychological necessity. As a psycho-analyst shrewdly remarked, monotheism and polytheism are two counterpoises balancing the spiritual mind. If gods are pushed out, angels and saints immediately rush in to fill the pantheon. The interrelation between one and many is a normal psychological function which works just in the same manner on higher spiritual planes unless inhibited by a theological dogma. Individuals excluding one another in a field of many is a perception of the same sense-mind, though even there the universal as One-Many will be the substratum for the play of exclusion. Higher up, on a plane which may be called the domain of the idea-mind, the interrelation between one and many changes into a commingling and interpenetration in which the deployment of One into Many becomes a fact of mystic experience. The Vedic theory of gods is based upon this perception, which is only a sublimation of a normal function of the mind. It is the One Existence (*Ekaṁ Sat*) that is viewed as Many (*bahudhā*); and beyond the One, there may be the Zero (*asat, śūnam*), or an indeterminable 'X' beyond numeration (*na sat nāsat*).[31]

There is a correspondence between the planes of perception (*citti*) and the planes of Reality (*lokas*), a fundamental axiom of existence. The percipient is the real One; and if he does not sink into a spiritual solipsism, but freely rises in the scale of being, the corresponding planes of Reality also manifest themselves as his luminous self-projections in the form of One-Many. And then, in the spiritual idiom of the Vedic seers, gods are *born* as One and Many and All. The same phenomenon of expanding consciousness (*brahma*) is described objectively in a symbolic language by the Vedas, and subjectively in an intellectual language by the Upaniṣads. They speak of a metaphysical realism in which One and Many do not clash either in form or in substance; and their theory of gods cannot be exclusively labelled as

[31] *Ṛ.V.*, I.164.46; X.72.2, 3; II.27.17; X.129.1.

monotheism, polytheism, or pantheism, because it is an integrated vision in which all these isms harmonize. Since this was the vision at the root of all forms of Ārya mysticism, a Buddhist nihilism or a Vedāntic monism (which are not to be confounded with a-theism or mono-theism) found nothing to quarrel with in a theory of many gods. This is a phenomenon which very naturally mystifies the western mind, which will see in it nothing but a condescension to an ineradicable superstition. From the Vedic age to the present times, the visions of One Existence and many gods have lived harmoniously in the spiritual realizations of India's greatest seers; and unless one understands from actual experience how this has been possible, it will be futile to talk of a scientific and rational approach to the study of Vedic religion.

CRITERION OF VEDIC INTERPRETATION

The Theory of Evolution has been a stumbling-block to a correct appreciation of the Vedic theory of gods. The problem of the origin of religion has been tackled by the Evolutionists in their usual way by assuming that the primitive mind, so deficient in logical and moral faculties, could not have the idea of one moral God residing in the heart of man. This idea is a slow growth of many millenniums preceded by several crude forms of faiths which have been discovered and duly labelled as so many isms by the anthropologists. But most of the modern Indologists now agree that the Vedic religion can in no way be ranked as primitive, and they have often protested against any attempt to make it appear in such a light. Yet, the mischief has already been done. Anthropologists, in support of their theories, would cite quotations from the Vedic literature torn from their contexts and thus help in confirming the prejudices which go to create a false tradition in Vedic interpretation. But, nevertheless, there has been a consensus of opinion among the Indologists about the cult of many gods in the Vedas being an unmistakable sign of immature religious consciousness. However, during the first decades of this century, the historical method has slowly fought its way against the evolutionary method in the field of cultural anthropology; and it is now a recognized fact that the idea of one moral God is the basic factor of primitive religion and all other isms are simply its aberrations.

But it must be admitted that the primacy of monotheism does not help us much in assessing the value of the Vedic religion. It is useful only as a corrective of the evolutionary hypothesis. If monotheism is the primitive form of religion, its claim to superiority as a maturer growth breaks down; and this clears away a prejudice against the Vedic religion, which should now be studied on the basis of other postulates.

But neither the evolutionary nor the historical method can be decisive when interpretation handles not the formal but the experiential aspect of a religious problem. Methodology may be a critique of forms; but it is not an exponent of an idea. As religion is an expression of a growing consciousness, its problems can be more adequately dealt with by psychology. But, even then, the inelastic calculus of general or abnormal psychology alone will not be enough; because, we are concerned here with a supernormal fact, a self-effectuating idea, a creation of a scale of values. And it becomes impossible to keep science and metaphysics apart in doing justice to the problem.

Space would not allow a full discussion of the question of origins. Only this can be hinted that the root-idea governing the Vedic religion is an expansion and self-exceeding of consciousness in which the conception of gods forms only a tangible medium. Of course, all religious experiences are marked by a sublimation of consciousness; but in the Vedic religion it has taken a form which has not been knowingly developed elsewhere. It is the epistemological assumption of the Vedānta, laying stress on the concretely realizable identity of the subject, the object, and the transcendent subsuming both, which supplies the motive of the Vedic religion. Its real nature, like that of Vāc, will be revealed only when, with a clear grasp of this identity, one moves up the stream to its source in simple intuition. A simple intuition of an integral whole, symbolically described by the seers as the flash of lightning,[32] is the original motif which is gradually filled in with details of forms. The whole is an explosive idea, an *a priori* fact, the measure of whose reality is in the ineffable *intensity* of perception. Its deployment in inner forms is decidedly *not* according to a rigid evolutionary pattern. One must remember that every spiritual movement is essentially a regression, and not a progression; it is a moving back from the manifest to the unmanifest. And, paradoxically speaking, the unmanifest may manifest itself at *any* stage of the mental evolution in its fullest intensity: herein lies the mystery of mysticism. The mystic realization is an intensive feeling-perception of an original simplex which only 'the trembling seer with the yearning of his poetic soul (*kāvya*)'[33] can give expression to; and this is the real character of the Vedic *mantras*.

HARMONY OF MYSTICISM AND OCCULTISM

The exoteric aspect of a religion shows itself in ritualism, as it may in theology or philosophy. The overgrowth of ritualism has always stood in the way of a correct estimate of the Vedic religion. The rationalists, old

[32] Cf. *Ke. U.*, IV.4. A rich symbolism has grown around this concept in the Saṁhitās.

[33] *Ṛ.V.*, VIII.79.1.

and modern, have of course looked askance at ritualistic excesses. But here in India, criticism was not so much against ritualism in itself as against the motive behind it; but the attitude of the rationalists of the West is different. It is not the motive that they look down upon, but rather the method: Ritualism is derived from magic, and magic is a ridiculous attempt at manipulation of nature's forces in an irrational way. But to try to control the forces of matter by the forces of mind (or of Spirit) is not in itself irrational. It is indeed what science itself is doing with amazing success on the plane of matter. But if mind seeks to pry deeper into the secrets of matter, by inducing a greater parity in essence between the two, the attempt cannot be called irrational. Only reason is there applied to a supra-physical plane, and is based upon perceptions other than physical. The normal will, working with the normal powers of the mind, is controlling the surface-forces of matter; the hypothesis that there might be deeper layers of these forces which could be brought into interaction is just probable. It is in this way that occult sciences are born, which have been the preoccupations of the human mind from the earliest times. It cannot be said that the attempt has been in vain. Every religion speaks of miracles. The sceptic may not look upon them as facts; but they at least record a premonition and a tendency of the human mind whose realization might very well have the sanction of the evolutionary hypothesis. India possesses a continuous tradition of the occult sciences. In any evaluation of the Vedic religion, this tradition must be given a due consideration and judged not by the dogmas of materialistic reasons, but by an analytic spirit that, with a wider comprehension, can draw upon data belonging to other orders of reality.

But we have already seen that it is a mistake to think that the Vedic *mantras* are simply formulas of ritual practice. The meaning of a rite may point either to the acquisition of power or to the realization of the Self. The philosophies of a later age speak of two aims of existence, enjoyment (*bhoga*) or renunciation leading to final beatitude (*apavarga*). That the same rite may have two references, according to the will of the performer, is a Brāhmaṇic tradition going down to the Tantras. Again, a rite is a means for evoking the will, which, in its turn, is the inchoate perception of the potency of a real-idea (*sadbhāva*). An objective element is needed to effectuate the idea-force; and here lies the origin of rituals and mystic practices. Broadly speaking, if psycho-physical being is the medium, we have the cult of Yoga; if it is anything outside it, we have the cult of Tantra. In the Vedic cult, the two are combined; the same *mantra* in a spiritual (*adhyātma*) sense may point to a yogic realization, while it may stand for

a Tāntric achievement, if taken in a phenomenal (*adhibhūta*) sense.[84] In the former, we have mysticism; and in the latter, occultism. There is an amalgamation of the two in the Vedic tradition, which has been continued to the present day in spiritual theory and practice in India; and unless we can assimilate its spirit, we are in danger of going astray in interpreting Vedic thought.

This combination of mysticism and occultism has found a verbal expression in Vedic symbolism misconstrued by the Indologists as Naturalism. It is a cult of the sensuous having an inward and transcendent reference at the same time; and it may be regarded as the master-key for unlocking the mysteries of Vedic religion. We have to remember that we are not here concerned with origins, in themselves crude and vague, but with forms made concrete through centuries of practice and using an idiom bristling with technicalities deliberately organized.

NEED FOR VYĀSA'S EPIC VISION

If the Indologists have failed to understand the spirit of the Vedas, their labours in textual construction and criticism are deserving of every praise. In grammar and philology, they have gone far ahead of the traditional Vedāṅgas. Their rationalism has here stood them in good stead in the collection and arrangement of materials and in bringing order into a chaos. The comparative method, which is one of their strongest points, has been a good instrument in their hands, widening the horizon and catholicizing the spirit of the researchers, though it has its obvious limitations. Comparisons of language, myths, rituals, and customs might help to fix the pattern of a form; but the meaning or the spirit underlying it may still be far beyond the grasp. Hasty generalizations, without a proper examination of the context or without going into the depth, have been a curse of the comparative method which has often been used to manipulate facts to support a gratuitous assumption.

The greatest service done by the Indologists has been to stimulate thoughts and bring about a renaissance in Vedic studies in India. Their interpretation has come as a challenge—a new *pūrvapakṣa*, which has struck at the foundations of faith more vigorously than the old rationalists did. The creation of a new school of Mīmāṁsā, which will take the whole question up to a higher level and discuss it with wisdom and insight, has become a desideratum. One thing is certain: the Veda cannot be taken

[84] A careful study of the things prayed for in the *mantras* will show that they are worded in a general way so as to bear a double meaning, spiritual and phenomenal. The ritualistic school has not gone behind the apparent symbology, though etymological considerations might have suggested such a course; and this has naturally been a source of misunderstanding in modern interpretations.

as a specimen of archaeological curiosity, because it is still a living force in Indian spirituality manifesting a unity of purpose in her cultural homogeneity.

In studying the Veda, we stand before something which demands from us the same scrupulous care and plasticity of revealing imagination as in the study of the life-history of an organism. Here we are concerned with the life-process of a super-idea: the integration of one and many, of spirit and matter, of the sensuous and the transcendent, of faith and reason, or to speak with the simple imagery of the Vedic seers, of heaven and earth. It is the characteristic of a dynamic idea to contain in its seed-form the whole gamut of its future formulations in an illuminatingly suggestive way; and so we must be careful in assessing the value of its various modes of manifestation. Reason is indispensable in scientific method; but then, reason is only an implement, and it must have sound postulates and catholicity of imagination to work upon if it will lead us to Truth.

We must have the epic vision of a Vyāsa to understand the Truth of a living idea both in its origin and its endless ramifications. And the Veda as a whole stands for such an idea, which, tradition says, is caught by the 'fire-rhythm' of the *Gāyatrī* and condensed into the 'shining drop' of the mystic Word.

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THE DAWN OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

A search for the beginnings of Indian philosophy would take us, down the long corridors of time, to the distant days of the Saṁhitās and Brāhmaṇas. Its earliest origins are traceable to the hymns of the *Ṛg-Veda*, the world's oldest scripture, in a form in which philosophy is hardly distinguishable from religion. In the ancient Aryan's conception of gods behind nature, his way of worship, his classification of the gods, his quest after unity among them and his marked monotheistic tendencies, his search for the supreme God, his ultimately rising to the transcendental Reality beyond all limitations—in all these and many more of his religious strivings can be perceived the dawn of Indian philosophy.[1] This dawn was to herald, in the period of the Āraṇyakas or Forest Books, more and more of the full light of day, through the growth of subjective speculation, which resulted in the gradual supersession of Vedic rituals and ceremonials by Upaniṣadic meditation and Self-knowledge.

In tracing the beginnings of Indian philosophy, one would do well to remember that the Aryans had two great gifts—the gifts of intellect and intuition. Their sharp intellect, endowed with the power of analysis, clove through nature and probed into her secrets, while their profound intuition, endowed them with the power to march ahead, sweeping past the masses of particulars, and arrive at generalizations.

GODS AS CONSCIOUS BUT IMPERSONAL POWERS

When one attends Vedic rituals, one can hear the priests chanting the Vedic hymns in praise of some superhuman invisible beings and get a glimpse into the original fervour with which the ancient Aryans composed and sang. The hymns are those of the Saṁhitās, and the rituals, those given in the Brāhmaṇas. Who are the beings who are propitiated through the rituals for mercy or boon? They are the *devas* (shining ones), the gods of the Vedas. When the Aryan saw the phenomena of nature—clouds gathering, lightning flashing, the sun rising and setting, the moon waxing and waning, etc.—, his simple faith made him believe in the existence of a conscious agent, called a *deva* or god, behind each of these phenomena. The uniformity or regularly recurring rhythm (*ṛta*) in nature only served

[1] This paper confines itself mostly to pre-Upaniṣadic Vedic literature. Its penultimate section deals with the heterodox and heretical tendencies of Vedic times, and the last section with some of the speculations and experiences recorded in the early Upaniṣads, but not incorporated in the classical Vedānta of Śaṅkara.

to deepen his conviction.[2] His faith may look childlike,[3] but there was in it the first attempt at arriving at the law of causality. Further, it indicated the conviction that what he saw around himself was not in itself final, and there was a reality behind all appearances.

Those who believe only in the mechanistic conception of the universe consider that the energy manifested by men and lower animals only can be associated with consciousness, and not other expressions of energy.[4] The Vedic *ṛṣis,* and after them all schools of Hindu philosophy, accept what has been called the *ādhidaivata* explanation of the universe—the theory that all manifestations of energy proceed from conscious beings, whether visible or not. After all, the idea of energy unaccompanied by consciousness is only an abstraction from human experience.[5] The Aryans accepted the existence of *devas* or gods, who in later philosophical development are considered to be the vassals or 'intelligences' of the one God or the supreme Brahman.[6]

With their instinct for systematization, the Aryans gradually began to classify the gods that presided over the numerous phenomena and to discover the relation between them. With the exception of a few abstract gods and some dual and triple gods, all others belong to the earth or sky or mid-region. Savitṛ or Sūrya (Sun), Indra or Vāyu (Wind), and Agni (Fire), the presiding deities of the celestial, atmospheric, and terrestrial regions, respectively, were multiplied into thirty-three, eleven in each sphere.[7] These thirty-three gods were still further multiplied into three thousand three hundred and thirty-nine, who may be looked upon as the representations of the glories of the thirty-three gods.[8] In later philosophic development, these gods are looked upon as the manifestations of the one God.[9]

Unlike the Greek gods and the Paurāṇic and Āgamic deities, the Vedic gods are impersonal or formless ; at any rate, their forms are not described in the Vedas, which glorify only their powers and mighty deeds. The Sun is metaphorically described as golden-handed,[10] and as seated in a chariot drawn by seven horses,[11] representing the seven rays, and moving on a single wheel.[12] He is powerful and majestic, but where is his form described?

[2] Cf. Thomson's *Seasons,* in which the eighteenth-century poet proceeds from nature to nature's God.
[3] Max Müller, *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy,* p. 35.
[4] P. T. Sreenivasa Iyengar, *Outlines of Indian Philosophy,* p. 54.
[5] Cf. Leibniz, *Metaphysics,* Section XIX. p. 35.
[6] *Ke. U.*
[7] *Ṛ.V.,* I.139.11 ; *Taittirīya Saṁhitā,* I.4.10.
[8] *Ṛ.V.,* III.9.9, with Sāyaṇa's commentary. Cf. *Bṛ. U.,* III.9.2.
[9] *Bṛ.U.,* III.9.1.
[10] *Ṛ.V.,* I.22.5.
[11] *Ibid.,* I.50.8.
[12] *Ibid.,* I.164.48.

Vāta (the Wind-god) is glorified and adored, but how he looks none knows.[13] When we read the beautiful and inspiring hymns, we feel that the process of personalization has just begun or will begin soon, whereas the fact is that the process is left incomplete, if begun at all. Personalization or anthropomorphism in its nature is not philosophic, but poetic. The mental vigour of the Aryans, and the onward march of their intuition, freed their philosophic tendency from the necessity for personification and preserved it intact, until they arrived at a satisfying solution of natural phenomena and the mystery of existence.

CONCEPTIONS OF COSMIC ORDER AND MORAL LAW

Gods like Mitra and Varuṇa not only bring about *ṛta* or nature's recurring rhythm or ordered course, but also maintain moral order in the universe. The conception of Varuṇa as a moral power is particularly striking, and the hymn in the *Atharva-Veda* (IV.16), describing his power which extends beyond the physical universe to the moral world, where his laws are equally strong and inviolable, expresses his omniscience and omnipresence as no other Vedic hymn does. This conception of Varuṇa as the supreme maintainer of physical and moral laws is superseded by that of Indra, the god of war with his mighty thunderbolt, just as Indra too is superseded later by other gods endowed with a sounder moral and ethical sense. Such supersession of Varuṇa by Indra does not mean a loss, temporary or otherwise, of the moral and ethical ideal.[14] It represents a stage in the growth of thought to higher conceptions of Reality, passing through the stages of adoration of single gods, to the monotheistic, and monistic.

CONCEPTION OF THE IṢṬADEVATĀ

The adoration of a multiplicity of gods may lead readers of the hymns to think that the Aryans were polytheists.[15] But in polytheism the gods worshipped retain their proper and well-defined places. In the Vedas, however, a god worshipped as the supreme Deity pales into insignificance, or is ignored, when another is adored as the highest, and this one too merges into obscurity when a third is worshipped and extolled as the Supreme for the time being.[16]

This procedure in adoration embodies the conception of the *iṣṭadevatā*

[13] *Ibid.*, X.168.
[14] Cf. Maurice Bloomfield, *Religion of the Veda*, p. 175.
[15] Most western scholars hold this view.
[16] Max Müller calls this henotheism or kathenotheism (*op. cit.*, p. 40). Kaegi calls this the worship of single gods (*The Rigveda*, p. 33). Macdonell believes that henotheism is only an appearance rather than a reality (*Vedic Mythology*, pp. 16, 17). Das Gupta is of opinion that it represents a stage which is neither polytheism nor monotheism, but partakes of the qualities of both (*A History of Indian Philosophy*, I. p. 19).

(chosen deity), by which the ancient Aryans chose a deity that appealed to them most and tried to attain the highest through adoration and worship, looking upon that deity as the Supreme itself, or as a manifestation of the Highest. This is exactly what the Hindus have been doing even to this day. As there were numerous groups of votaries under the leadership of different teachers and guides, several *iṣṭadevatās* came to be adored, and their worship became popular. The conception of the *iṣṭadevatā*, which began clearly with the Saṁhitās, and came more and more into vogue in the period of the Purāṇas and the Āgamas, contained within itself the monotheistic tendency in germ form, which later became well pronounced and also developed further into monism.

When the genuine spirit of thanksgiving and the childlike fervour expressed in the early Vedic hymns gave place to rank ritualism, elaborate ceremonialism, and highly-wrought symbolism, a reaction naturally set in, resulting in the stimulation of tendencies which proved to be the germs of Indian philosophic thought.

FROM MULTIPLICITY TO UNITY—MONOTHEISM

Owing to the impersonal nature of the Vedic gods or their incomplete personalization, as well as the interconnection between natural phenomena, the gods who are their presiding deities happen to be described more or less in the same manner. As a result, it is hard to determine which of the gods is intended to be praised in a particular hymn, the name in it being often the only clue. Further, we notice in the hymns the practice of combining individual gods possessing common qualities or rights into dual divinities. Thus Indra, the conqueror of enemies, and Agni, the conqueror of darkness and dark inimical forces, are extolled and worshipped together as Indra-Agni, implying thereby that the power that is Indra is identical with the power that is Agni, or that the same divine power works through them both. There are also other dual gods such as Indra-Vāyu, Indra-Bṛhaspati, Indra-Soma, Indra-Pūṣan, Indra-Viṣṇu, and Indra-Varuṇa, as well as Agni-Soma, Mitra-Varuṇa, Soma-Rudra, and Dyāvā-Pṛthivī. On some occasions three gods are represented as working together, such as Aryaman, Mitra, and Varuṇa; and Agni, Soma, and Gandharva.[17] Later on, some composers take a collective view of the gods and bring them under the comprehensive name of the Viśvedevas (All-gods). This sweeping classification, based evidently on the grand and unbroken harmony of plan and purpose underlying the cosmic process, was a natural and logical development of the practice of coupling and tripling the names of similar gods,

[17] This shows that the adoration goes to the one Spirit behind the dual and the triple gods.

and meant the recognition of the same divine power working through all the gods.

Such classification marks a distinct progress in mythology, religion, and philosophy from multiplicity to unity as an essential characteristic of the Godhead. It is worth noting that none of the gods, however powerful, like Indra, Mitra, Varuṇa, and others, is raised to the position of the head of the pantheon, showing thereby the failure of monotheism in the accepted sense. The unity of the Godhead was sought not by discovering the greatest or the highest of the gods, but by searching for the common divine power behind them all. This tendency in theological and philosophical thought is seen expressed in passages such as: 'Indra, Mitra, Varuṇa, Agni, they call Him, and then He is that celestial, beautiful-winged bird (Sun); Existence is One, sages call It variously: they call It Agni, Yama, Mātariśvan.'[18] Again, inspired poets depict under many names 'the beautiful-winged who is one';[19] and 'the worshipful divinity of the gods is one'.[20]

Unity of the Godhead was arrvied at also in another, more abstract, manner by personifying some selected distinguishing divine feature and adoring it as the supreme God. Thus the word *'viśva-karman'*, meaning 'the fashioner of the universe' or 'the all-creator', originally an epithet of Indra and the Sun, later ceases to be an epithet, and signifies the God above all gods, who is called Viśvakarman,

> Who is our father, our creator, maker,
> Who every place doth know and every creature,
> By whom alone to gods their names were given,
> To him all other creatures go, to ask him.[21]

Similarly, from the epithet *'prajāpati'*, meaning 'lord of living beings', first applied to gods like Savitṛ, 'the vivifier', came Prajāpati, the 'Father-God', the most important of the gods that successively became pre-eminent. Prajāpati is in charge of creation and preservation of the universe. His greatness has been described thus:

> In the beginning rose Hiraṇyagarbha,
> Born as the only lord of all existence.
> This earth he settled firm, and heaven established:
> What god shall we adore with our oblations?[22]

[18] *Ṛ.V.*, I.164.46.
[19] *Ibid.*, X.114.5.
[20] *'Mahat-devānām-asuratvam-ekam'* (*Ibid.*, III.55).
[21] *Ṛ.V.*, X.82.3 (Trans. by Kaegi).
[22] *Ibid.*, X.121.1 (Trans. by Kaegi).

PANTHEISM AND MONISM

One might expect that such an all-powerful Prajāpati, the 'Father-God', might have satisfied the Aryan's monotheistic craving for the supreme Godhead ; but, no, even Prajāpati ceases to appeal after a time to the ever-soaring mind of the Aryans. The attempt to push ahead in search of something still higher than Prajāpati was made, and hence we find such terms as Puruṣa (the supreme Man), Hiraṇyagarbha (the Golden-Egg), Prāṇa (Breath or Spirit), Dhātṛ (Maker), Vidhātṛ (Arranger), Nāmadhā (Name-giver of the gods), and others, which are all the names of the one God (*Eka Deva*).

Though the monotheistic strain satisfied many, yet there were others who sought after monism. There were others again who must have thought in terms of both, or risen from monotheism to monism, as we can infer from hymns in which both the conceptions are found mixed.

Pantheism is eloquently expressed in the passage in which Aditi (lit. the Boundless, the Infinite), who is the universe itself and is conceived as the immanent Spirit, is described: 'She is the heaven, She is the atmosphere, She is the mother ; She is the father, son, all gods, and the whole world ; She is creation and birth.'[23]

In the first portion of the *Puruṣa-sūkta*[24] pantheism is expressed in a most poetic manner. Puruṣa is therein described as possessed of 'myriad heads, myriad eyes, myriad feet. He exists pervading the terrestrial regions'. This universe therefore is His physical body. But, immediately after this description, mention is made that 'He extends beyond it (the universe) by ten fingers (space)'. This shows the transcendental nature of the ultimate Principle. Thus the same Puruṣa is thought of as immanent and transcendent at the same time.

In their search for the ultimate unitary Principle, the *ṛṣis* conceived of an infinite and absolute Power as the primary cause of all creation, which could be neither masculine nor feminine, which was beyond all names and forms, and which was described as *'Tad Ekam'* (That One). We come across such a description by Dīrghatamas. After questioning, what that One alone is which established the six spaces of the world, it is asked, 'Was it perhaps the One in the shape of the Unborn?'[25] This unborn One is spoken of also in another passage: 'The One is placed in the navel of the unborn where all beings rested.'[26] The hymn to the Viśvedevas says that 'all beings that move and all that move not, whether animals, birds, or creatures of various kinds, rest on the One basis'.[27]

[23] *Ibid.*, I.89.10.
[24] *Ibid.*, X.90.
[25] *Ibid.*, I.164.6.
[26] *Ibid.*, X.82.6.
[27] *Ibid.*, III.54.8.

It is this conception of the One that is most poetically described in the 'Hymn to Creation', where it reaches great philosophical heights:

Then there was neither being nor non-being.
The atmosphere was not, nor sky above it.
What covered all? And where? By what protected?
Was there the fathomless abyss of waters?

Then neither death nor deathlessness existed;
Of day and night there was yet no distinction.
Alone That One breathed calmly, self-supported,
Other than It was none, nor aught above It.

Darkness there was at first in darkness hidden;
This universe was undistinguished water.
That which in void and emptiness lay hidden
Alone by power of fervour was developed.

Then for the first time arose desire,
Which was the primal germ of mind, within it.
And sages, searching in their heart, discovered
In Nothing the connecting bond of Being.[28]

Here we have an expression of the highest monism. The transcendental Reality, which is beyond all limitations of the universe, is described in the hymn as *Tad Ekam* or That One, suggesting that It is something positive in character. Its composer must have belonged to the most thoughtful section of Aryan society, and realized this one Being, beyond all conditions, centuries before the composition of the *Ṛg-Veda Saṁhitā*.[29]

ĀTMAN AND BRAHMAN

In the *Ṛg-Veda*, the term '*brahman*' was mostly connected with ritualistic associations. '*Brahma*' meant 'word' or 'speech' and also that which manifests, blossoms forth, creates, or bursts forth. From this, later on, the conception of Brahman as the transcendental Reality developed. The soul is denoted in the *Ṛg-Veda* by the words '*manas*',[30] '*ātman*',[31] and '*asu*'.[32] Ātman in the sense of the Self—the soul of the universe—occurs in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*.[33]

[28] *Ibid.*, X.129. [29] Max Müller, *op. cit.*, p. 51. [30] *R.V.*, X.58.
[31] *Ibid.*, X.16.3. [32] *Ibid.*, I.164.4. [33] XIV.5.5.15.

Now, some relation of Ātman with Brahman, or with the monotheistic God, or the identity of Ātman with Brahman, is at the root of all dualistic or non-dualistic philosophy. Even in the pre-Upaniṣadic literature, we have evidences of such relationship or identity. The passage from the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa*, 'Agni is fixed in speech, speech in the heart, the heart in me, me in the immortal, the immortal in Brahman',[34] synthesizes in one sweep the terrestrial region, of which the presiding deity is Agni, the soul of the worshipper, and the soul of the universe. Those uttering the Vedic *Gāyatrī* 'meditate on the glorious effulgence of Savitṛ' and pray that 'He may direct their intellect'.[35] In the passage praising Viṣṇu, the all-pervading Spirit, we have: 'As an (all-seeing) eye spread out in the (spacious) sky, the wise ones ever realise the supreme state of Viṣṇu (in their hearts).'[36] The unity of man, god, and the Supreme is well expressed in the words: 'He is the sun dwelling in the sky, the wind dwelling in the intermediate region, fire dwelling on the altar, guest dwelling in the house, consciousness existing in man, the dweller in the most excellent orb (the sun), the dweller in the cosmic order, dweller in the air, born in the waters, in the rays of light, . . . the Truth Itself.'[37] Vāc eloquently speaks out the identity of her soul with the soul of the universe in the words: 'I am the sovereign queen, the possessor of wealth, and omnipotent, the highest object of worship; as such the gods have placed me in various spheres, abiding in many conditions, entering into numerous forms.'[38] Vāmadeva tells his experience in similar words: 'I am Manu and the sun, I am the wise Ṛṣi Kakṣīvat . . . I am the far-seeing Uśanas, behold me! I gave the earth to the venerable (Manu). I have given rain to those who offer oblations. . . . The gods obey my will!'[39] That this spiritual experience dawns in the heart of man is indicated in the *Nāsadīya-sūkta*: 'And sages searching in their hearts discovered in Nothing the connecting bond of Being.'[40]

COSMOLOGY

In the pre-Upaniṣadic literature itself one can trace the evolution of cosmological conceptions from crude ideas to the highest. The earlier hymns of the *Ṛg-Veda* speak of the mighty gods like Mitra, Varuṇa, Indra, and others creating the heaven and earth and other objects. Some poets ask about the origin of the gods and their hidden places.[41] One of them

[34] III.10.8.4.
[35] *Ṛ.V.*, III.62.10; *Śukla Yajur-Veda*, IV.35; *S.V.*, II.8.12.
[36] *Ṛ.V.*, I.22.20, 21.
[37] *Ibid.*, IV.40.5.
[38] *Ibid.* X.125.3.
[39] *Ibid.* IV.26.1, 2.
[40] *Ibid.* X.129.4 (Trans. by Kaegi).
[41] *Ibid.* X.82.5.

asks in all seriousness, 'in order to know it, not for pastime alone', how many suns, dawns, and waters there are, and whether night preceded day or the day preceded night. Another asks, what kind of wood it was and what tree from which heaven and earth were built so firmly that they remain forever, whereas the days and mornings disappear. It is also asked what was the support, what and how was it, from which the all-seeing Viśvakarman produced this earth and stretched the sky by his might.[42] The *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* answers this by saying that Brahman is the wood and Brahman is the tree from which heaven and earth were made. The hymns to Viśvakarman (*Ṛ.V.*, X.81-82) and Hiraṇyagarbha (*Ṛ.V.*, X.121) express the theistic conception of creation; the hymn to the supreme Puruṣa (*Puruṣa-sūkta, Ṛ.V.*, X.90), the pantheistic view; and the hymn to Creation (*Nāsadīya-sūkta, Ṛ.V.*, X.129), the higher philosophical view in which the origin of the universe is enveloped in the mystery of the primal non-differentiation of being and non-being.

ESCHATOLOGY

The problem of post-mortem existence also engaged the attention of the Aryans in the Saṁhitā and Brāhmaṇa period. Many hymns express belief in the existence of another world. The wicked and the evil-doers, 'false in thought' and 'false in speech',[43] who violate the commands of Mitra and Varuṇa, are denied the gift of the gods, their bodies sink into the tomb, and their souls are cast away into 'the deep abyss' in endless darkness. The *Atharva-Veda* describes Varuṇa as giving his votaries, after their death, 'a new and blessed life united with the gods and his own people in the highest heaven'. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* mentions that those who do not perform rites properly, with correct knowledge, are born again after death and have to die again. Numerous hymns refer to good deeds as righteous acts. Thus the conception of morality was raised into an inviolable law associated with the doctrine of Karma and reincarnation. In the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa*, Ātman is considered omnipresent, and the man who knows it is looked upon as sinless. The word '*ātman*' came to mean the soul of man and the soul of the universe, and this explains the belief that Self-knowledge makes man sinless and holy, and enables him to go beyond birth.

JARRING NOTES

There are occasional references in the Vedas to heterodox tendencies manifesting themselves as doubt and disbelief. The heretics of Vedic times must have spread what has been called false knowledge by a few of the

[42] *Ibid.*, X.81. [43] *Ibid.*, IV.5.5.

Upaniṣads.[44] Such knowledge is fit for demons only; its reward would last so long as the sense pleasures lasted; it upsets sacred books and should not be acquired. The hymn to Faith (Śraddhā) says: 'We invoke Faith in the morn, at noon, and at sunset; O Faith, inspire us with faith' (*Ṛ.V.*, X.151.5). Such a hymn indirectly points to those whose faith must have declined and who did not believe in gods or in singing hymns to them. Some hymns refer to the man who wavers in his trust in Indra and to his words, ' "There is no Indra" many men are saying' (*Ṛ.V.*, VIII.89.3); to current disbelief in Indra's existence and powers (*Ṛ.V.*, II.12); and to the people who describe the followers of the Veda as 'selfish prattling priests that go about self-deluded' (*Ṛ.V.*, X.82). Yāska condemns in his *Nirukta* the anti-Vedic beliefs of Kautsa, who criticized the Vedic hymns as devoid of meaning or consistency, and such defence of the Vedas in an authoritative book of exegesis clearly indicates the importance the heretical beliefs had already attained by the time of its author. The *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (I.2) refers to more than half a dozen atheistic views of the creation of the universe, all the result of the heretical doctrines.

Jain tradition, which reckons Pārśvanātha (*c.* eighth century B.C.) as one of the Tīrthaṅkaras, also points to heterodox doctrines that prevailed in the India of the Vedas. The *Brahmajāla-Sutta* (lit. the net of Brahman), which is considered as one of the Buddha's sermons, mentions as many as sixty-two philosophical theories that prevailed before the Buddha. The *Mahābhārata* also refers to the diverse theories and schools of thought of the time.

The heretical and heterodox tendencies gained strength in time and formed the impetus behind the doctrines of utilitarianism and crude hedonism of the Cārvākas, ascribed to Bṛhaspati and therefore known as the Bṛhaspati philosophy, and also of the materialist Lokāyatikas.[45]

THE RICH BLOSSOMING OF THE UPANIṢADIC PERIOD

When religion and philosophy emerged from the pre-Upaniṣadic period, it cut off the shackles of an over-laden theology, and this freedom gave Indian spiritual and philosophical thought a striking impetus which resulted in a rich variety of experiences and speculations. All these have been recorded in the early Upaniṣads.

The Upaniṣads are not a systematic treatise, but a repository of gems of experiences and speculations, not of one *ṛṣi*, but of many, whose unrecorded biographies covered a millennium or more. We therefore find

[44] See *Kaṭha*, *Maitrāyaṇī*, and *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣads*.
[45] *Vide*, Max Müller, *op. cit.*, pp. 86 ff.

varied conceptions of man, the universe, and the Reality behind both of them, some of which are stated below:

Meditation versus Ritualism: The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* (I.1), which gave a subjective turn to the horse-sacrifice, taught the process of meditation in place of the sacrificial act. The *Muṇḍaka* (I.2.7) declared sacrificial ceremonials to be useless for seekers of truth and useful only to fools. The *Śvetāśvatara* (II.6, 7), which is rather a later Upaniṣad, takes note of the different schools of thought that had come to exist by the time of its composition, and exhibits a spirit of synthesis and reconciliation by expressing appreciation of ritualistic worship.

The Nature of Reality: As regards the nature of Reality, the teaching that is most striking, best developed, and most clearly expressed, in a majority of passages, is non-dualism ; but there are other currents of thought as well. The Absolute as the transcendental Reality is described in many typical passages,[46] and in some passages the cosmic Principle, the immanent Spirit, is indicated,[47] whereas both aspects of Reality are mentioned side by side in certain other passages.[48]

Dualism: The Upaniṣads contain passages which declare clear distinctions between God, soul, and matter, and which are therefore considered as supporting dualism.[49]

Qualified Non-dualism: There is yet another class of texts which do not declare complete dualism, nor speak of the one Reality, but point to a position midway between dualism and non-dualism. These are the qualified non-dualistic passages.[50]

Non-dualism: Entirely different from the above two classes of passages are those which speak of an uncompromising non-dualism.[51]

What the Upaniṣadic seers did was simply to tell their varied experiences without attempting to reconcile them for the sake of uniformity or consistency. They accept and affirm the diversity of the phenomenal world, and yet declare that it is all Brahman, the Absolute. From Brahman the universe has come, and to Him it will return.[52] Having created it out of Himself, He entered into it.[53] Besides the non-dualistic, we have thus the pantheistic creed. From the conception that Brahman is the inner ruler and controller must have come the teaching that Brahman is God standing apart and controlling the universe. By His will the sun and moon, the sky and the earth are held together.[54]

[46] *Bṛ. U.*, III.8. [47] E.g. *Śāṇḍilya-vidyā* of the *Chā. U.*, III.14.
[48] *Mu. U.*, I.1.6.
[49] *Bṛ. U.*, IV.37 ; *Chā. U.*, VIII.12 ; *Mu. U.*, III.1.1 ; *Pra. U.*, IV.9 ; *Śve. U.*, I.9.
[50] *Chā. U.*, VI.2.3, VI.3.2 ; *Tai. U.*, III.1.1 ; *Ka. U.*, III.1.
[51] *Bṛ. U.*, II.4.14, IV.5.7 ; *Chā. U.*, VI.2.1, VI.8.7 ; *Mu. U.*, III.2.9.
[52] *Mu. U.*, I.1.7 ; *Tai. U.*, III.1.
[53] *Tai. U.*, II.6. [54] *Bṛ. U.*, III.8.9.

The Universe: The doctrine that Brahman, the ultimate Cause, does not undergo any change, though It may appear to have changed into the universe, is taught in some passages.[55] There is also another view which holds that the effect is the result of a change in the cause. Thus it is taught that Brahman desired to be many, created three elements, viz. fire, water, and earth in their subtle forms, and entered into them, and by their combination all other things have been formed.[56] Later on, five elements are mentioned, viz. ether, air, fire, water, and earth in their subtle forms.[57] Herein we have the genesis of the theory of evolution, taught later by the Sāṁkhya system.

The Goal of Life: The conceptions of the goal of life also differ according to the two conceptions of Brahman—immanent and transcendent. The idea of the Saṁhitās and the Brāhmaṇas that man continues after death in some form recurs in the Upaniṣads, and the experience of Brahman is considered to take place after the death of the body. Says the *Chāndogya* (III.14): 'This is my Self within the heart . . . This is Brahman. May I become It when I depart.' Another passage teaches that the goal, viz. identity with Brahman, can be reached in this very life, as it is the rediscovery by man of what he already is (*Bṛ. U.*, IV.4.6-7).

Means of Attaining the Goal: The means of realizing Brahman also are differently explained. Hearing about the Truth, reflection on it, and meditation are enjoined by most of the early Upaniṣads,[58] whereas a synthesis of activity and meditation, reminding us of the *Bhagavad-Gītā* of a later age, is taught by the *Īśa Upaniṣad*.

The sparks of thought that could be seen in the pre-Upaniṣadic Vedic literature burst forth into so many brilliant lights in the Upaniṣadic period. From these lights were derived the warmth and illumination of the different schools of philosophy in the period of the systems.

Every one of the Vedāntic system-builders—Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja, Madhva, and others—has followed his own standpoint in his commentary, bringing a mind illumined and directed by his own individual spiritual experience to bear upon his task, and interpreted all the passages uniformly to uphold his own position and popularize the system of thought he expounded. We cannot reconcile these different systems unless we accept, like Sri Ramakrishna, the validity of the different kinds of spiritual experience which form their authority and which have been recorded in the Upaniṣads. Different experiences are different readings of the same Reality from different perspectives and levels.

[55] *Chā. U.*, VI.1.4-6. [56] *Ibid.*, VI.2.3, 4. [57] *Tai. U.*, II.1. [58] *Bṛ. U.*, II.4.5.

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A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF THE UPANIṢADS

THE religion of the three hundred million people who call themselves Hindus is based on the Vedas, that most ancient and most wonderful body of literature which, it is claimed, is not the production of man, but the voice of God Himself and co-eternal with Him. At first sight, it may sound strange that any book can be called eternal. But by the word '*veda*', which literally means knowledge, no books are primarily meant, but the sum-total of the knowledge of God, which, concerning itself, as it does, with abstract principles, is necessarily eternal. Just as gravitation existed before Newton, and would have remained just the same even if he had not discovered it, so these principles existed before man, and will remain for ever. Their connection with man is that they were revealed to certain exceptionally gifted persons called *ṛṣis* or sages, who intuited them and handed them down through a succession of disciples. Of course, the orthodox view regards the entire mass of recorded experience of these sages as revealed knowledge or Śruti and holds it as the supreme authority in religious matters, to which all other literature is subordinate and must give way whenever it is in conflict with the former. The other literature is called Smṛti, which includes the Dharma-śāstras, Itihāsas, Purāṇas, Tantras, and other branches of knowledge.

THE VEDIC LITERATURE

The Vedas have two principal divisions, the Mantras and Brāhmaṇas. The former tell us about supersensuous things, which we could not know but for them. The latter, however, are explanatory to the former and delineate their application in sacrifices. Though the Brāhmaṇas are thus subsidiary to the Mantras, both are held to be equally authoritative. The Mantras are of three classes. Those that are metrical and are recited in invocation to the gods are called *ṛc*; those that are in prose and are applied to the sacrificial acts are called *yajus*; while *ṛcas* that are meant to be chanted in sacrifices, and not simply recited, are called *sāman*. These three classes of Mantras have been compiled into four books or Saṁhitās, called the *Ṛg-Veda, Yajur-Veda, Sāma-Veda,* and *Atharva-Veda Saṁhitās.* Some part of the Brāhmaṇas used to be taught in the forest to those who observed particular vows. This was called the Āraṇyaka. The Upaniṣads are generally the last portions of the Āraṇyakas. The Vedas, again, fall into two distinct portions according to their theme: one dealing with the

performance of rituals (*karma-kāṇḍa*) and the other mainly devoted to knowledge (*jñāna-kāṇḍa*). The Upaniṣads come under this second class.

THE UPANIṢADS: THEIR NUMBER AND CHARACTER

The Vedic literature was vast, and was divided into a large number of branches, only a portion of which has come down to us, the bulk having been destroyed either during the Buddhistic cataclysm or through the natural extinction of those Brāhmaṇa families which were their custodians. Hence it is impossible to say definitely the number of the Upaniṣads, and which part of the Vedas contained them. Of the extant Upaniṣads, we find that, of those which are stated to belong to any particular portion of the Vedas, all except one form part of the Brāhmaṇas, and often of their Āraṇyaka section. The exception is the *Īśāvāsya*, which forms the last chapter of the *Śukla Yajur-Veda*.

The *Muktikā Upaniṣad* (I.30.39) gives a list of one hundred and eight Upaniṣads, in the following order:

Īśā(vāsya), Kena, Kaṭha(vallī), Praśna, Muṇḍaka, Māṇḍūkya, Taittirīya, Aitareya, Chāndogya, Bṛhadāraṇyaka, Brahma, Kaivalya, Jābāla, Śvetāśva-(tara), Haṁsa, Āruṇi, Garbha, Nārāyaṇa, (Parama)haṁsa, (Amṛta)bindu, (Amṛta)nāda, (Atharva)śiras, (Atharva)śikhā, Maitrāyaṇī, Kauṣītaki, Bṛhajjābāla, (Nṛsiṁha)tāpanī, Kālāgnirudra, Maitreyī, Subāla, Kṣuri(kā), Mantrikā, Sarvasāra, Nirālamba, (Śuka)rahasya, Vajrasūcikā, Tejo(bindu), Nāda(bindu), Dhyāna(bindu), (Brahma)vidyā, Yogatattva, Ātma(pra)bodha, (Nārada)parivrājaka, Triśikhī(brāhmaṇa), Sītā, (Yoga)cūḍā(maṇi), Nirvāṇa, Maṇḍala(brāhmaṇa), Dakṣiṇā(mūrti), Śarabha, Skanda, Mahānārāyaṇa, Advaya(tāraka), (Rāma)rahasya, Rāmatāpanī, Vāsudeva, Mudgala, Śāṇḍilya, Paiṅgala, Bhikṣu, Mahat, Śārīraka, (Yoga)śikhā, Turīyātīta, Sannyāsa, (Paramahaṁsa)parivrājaka, Akṣamālikā, Avyakta (Vajra?), Ekākṣara, (Anna)pūrṇā, Sūrya, Akṣi, Adhyātma, Kuṇḍikā, Sāvitrī, Ātma, Pāśupata, Parabrahma, Avadhūta, Tripurātapana, Devī, Tripurā, Kaṭha(rudra), Bhāvanā, Hṛdaya, (Yoga)-kuṇḍali(nī), Bhasma(jābāla), Rudrākṣa(jābāla), Gaṇa(pati), Darśana, Tārasāra, Mahāvākya, Pañcabrahma, (Prāṇ)āgnihotra, Gopālatapana, Kṛṣṇa, Yājñavalkya, Varāha, Śāṭyāyanī, Hayagrīva, Dattātreya, Gāruḍa, Kali-(santaraṇa), Jābāli, Saubhāgya, (Sarasvatī)rahasya, (Bahv)ṛca, and *Muktikā*.[1]

[1] For the sake of metre some of the titles in this list are in an abridged form. The portions in brackets are filled in by a comparison with the second list, which is in prose. The word '*rahasya*' occurs thrice in this list. The order of distribution of the words '*Sarasvatī*', '*Rāma*', and '*Śuka*' to them is a matter of guess work. Similarly, with the word '*parivrājaka*', occurring twice, '*Nārada*' has been prefixed to the first and '*Paramahaṁsa*' to the second; and the second *Haṁsa* has been enlarged into *Paramahaṁsa*. *Bhasma(jābāla)* and *Avyakta* of this list are probably to be equated with *Brahmajābāla* and *Vajra* of the second list. The order in which the Upaniṣads are delineated here may not have any particular significance.

The Upaniṣad further classifies them under different Vedas thus:

(1) *Ṛg-Veda* (10)—*Aitareya, Kauṣītaki, Nādabindu, Ātmaprabodha, Nirvāṇa, Mudgala, Akṣmālikā, Tripurā, Saubhāgya,* and *Bahvṛca*;

(2a) *Śukla Yajur-Veda* (19)—*Īśāvāsya, Bṛhadāraṇyaka, Jābāla, Haṁsa, Paramahaṁsa, Subāla, Mantrikā, Nirālamba, Triśikhībrāhmaṇa, Maṇḍala-brāhmaṇa, Advayatāraka, Paiṅgala, Bhikṣu, Turīyātīta, Adhyātma, Tārasāra, Yājñavalkya, Śāṭyāyanī,* and *Muktikā*;

(2b) *Kṛṣṇa Yajur-Veda* (32)—*Kaṭhavallī, Taittirīya, Brahma, Kaivalya, Śvetāśvatara, Garbha, Nārāyaṇa, Amṛtabindu, Amṛtanāda, Kālāgnirudra, Kṣurikā, Sarvasāra, Śukarahasya, Tejobindu, Dhyānabindu, Brahmavidyā, Yogatattva, Dakṣiṇāmūrti, Skanda, Śārīraka, Yogaśikhā, Ekākṣara, Akṣi, Avadhūta, Kaṭharudra, Hṛdaya, Yogakuṇḍalinī, Pañcabrahma, Prāṇāgnihotra, Varāha, Kalisantaraṇa,* and *Sarasvatīrahasya*;

(3) *Sāma-Veda* (16)—*Kena, Chāndogya, Āruṇi, Maitrāyaṇī, Maitreyī, Vajrasūcikā, Yogacūḍāmaṇi, Vāsudeva, Mahat, Sannyāsa, Vajra* (*Avyakta?*), *Kuṇḍikā, Sāvitrī, Rudrākṣajābāla, Darśana,* and *Jābāli*;

(4) *Atharva-Veda* (31)—*Praśna, Muṇḍaka, Māṇḍūkya, Atharvaśiras, Atharvaśikhā, Bṛhajjābāla, Nṛsiṁhatāpanī, Nāradaparivrājaka, Sītā, Śarabha, Mahānārāyaṇa, Rāmarahasya, Rāmatāpanī, Śāṇḍilya, Paramahaṁsaparivrājaka, Annapūrṇā, Sūrya, Ātma, Pāśupata, Parabrahma, Tripurātapana, Devī, Bhāvanā, Brahmajābāla, Gaṇapati, Mahāvākya, Gopālatapana, Kṛṣṇa, Hayagrīva, Dattātreya,* and *Gāruḍa*.

All the titles mentioned above do not have the same importance. Some, particularly those Upaniṣads which eulogize sectarian deities or religious doctrines, appear to be of later origin, although a plausible argument can be put forward in support of the orthodox claim about their simultaneity, viz. that those Upaniṣads only got a coating of new matter at places at a subsequent date. In any case, there is very little reason to doubt that at least the important Upaniṣads are antecedent to the Buddhistic movement. In deciding which of the Upaniṣads are important, we may take a clue from the great commentator Śaṅkarācārya, who has commented on only eleven of them, although he has quoted passages from about half a dozen more. The eleven that he has commented on are: *Īśāvāsya, Kena, Kaṭhavallī, Praśna, Muṇḍaka, Māṇḍūkya, Taittirīya, Aitareya, Chāndogya, Bṛhadāraṇyaka,* and *Nṛsiṁhapūrvatāpanī Upaniṣads*. The commentary on the *Śvetāśvatara* may be safely dismissed, on textual evidence, as not being his. Rāmānuja, the other great commentator, has not commented on the Upaniṣads, but in his writings has quoted from about the same number of Upaniṣads as Śaṅkara, though somewhat different ones beyond the first eleven. That new Upaniṣads were produced from time to time may be inferred from the case

of the *Allopaniṣad*, which was composed during the reign of Akbar, probably at his instance. The Sanskrit of the Upaniṣads is so archaic, and its grammar so flexible, that a clever imitator can easily compose a work that will look like a genuine Upaniṣad. One thing, however, is clear from this tendency towards imitation. It is the high regard with which the Upaniṣads are looked upon by all sects in Hinduism.

The Upaniṣads, like the rest of the Vedas, were handed down orally, writing being a thing of later introduction. We find, quite naturally, the same subject treated, with some variations, in different Upaniṣads, as for instance, the philosophy of the five fires (*pañcāgni-vidyā*) in *Chāndogya*, V.3.10 and *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, VI.2 ; or the meditation on *prāṇa* in these two Upaniṣads, in V.1 and VI.1, respectively; or the *vaiśvānara-vidyā* in *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, II.1 and *Kauṣītaki*, IV. Identical verses also occur in different Upaniṣads, naturally enough. But we cannot explain how a whole section is repeated almost verbatim in the same Upaniṣad, viz. the touching episode of Yājñavalkya and Maitreyī in *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, II.4 and IV.5. Obviously, it is due to the exigencies of oral tradition in the course of so many millenniums.

MEANING OF THE TERM 'UPANIṢAD'

The word '*upaniṣad*' is derived from the prefixes *upa* (near) and *ni* (perfectly), joined to the verbal root *sad* (to shatter, attain, or destroy), and means the knowledge of Reality, expounded in books of that name. Śaṅkara, defining the word, says in his introduction to the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*: 'Those seekers after liberation who, being averse to things of the senses, whether here or hereafter, *take up* this knowledge and practise it with *steadfast* devotion, have their ignorance etc., which are the seeds of their transmigration, *shattered* or *destroyed*. . . . Or it makes those aspirants attain the supreme Brahman' etc. In the introduction to the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, he says: ' "*Upaniṣad*" means knowledge, either because it *slashes* or *shatters* the miseries of passing through the mother's womb, birth, decay, etc., or because the highest good is *established* in it. Books also are so designated, as they contribute to that knowledge.' So the word primarily means knowledge or philosophy, and secondarily books relating to it. The Upaniṣads are also called Vedānta, literally 'the end of the Vedas', either on account of their position at the end of certain books of the Vedas[2] or on account of their representing the essence or conclusions of the Vedas. They are also called *rahasya*, or secret, as only qualified initiates had access to them under the direct guidance of the teacher.

[2] Compare the synonym *Vedaśīrṣa*, the top of the Vedas, the beginning being considered the root.

THE TESTIMONY OF THE UPANIṢADS

The Upaniṣads represent the quintessence of the wisdom that is embedded in the Vedas, those marvellous records of the spiritual experience of man. They treat not of secular knowledge, which any science can teach, but of *Brahma-vidyā*, the knowledge of Brahman, the ultimate Reality of the universe. The province of the scriptures is a unique one. They are one of the means of valid knowledge, known as *śabda pramāṇa* (verbal testimony), along with perception, inference, etc., and their special field is the supersensuous plane. Perception deals with objects that come within the range of our senses, in which field it is paramount. Inference, which is based on perception, is operative regarding things that are not so perceived, but are accessible to the mind. But where perception, inference, etc. fail to give us definite knowledge, scriptures like the Upaniṣads are our only guide. In that domain, they have infinitely greater validity than even perception, upon which we rely so much in our everyday life. Such questions as whether our personality survives death ; whether there is a future life and a world called heaven where a man goes after death ; whether he ever returns to this world ; what is his final goal ; what is the nature and goal of the world ; what is the nature of God and of soul and what is their relation with each other and with the world ; and what is the ultimate truth of existence—obviously come under this description, and the Upaniṣads give us the last word on all such matters. Through no other means is it possible for us to get convincing answers to our queries regarding them. In fact, God has been declared in the Śrutis as 'the Being that is to be known only through the Upaniṣads'. Not being the work of man, they are free from the usual shortcomings of all human endeavour such as error, doubt, and deception. It is open to us all to verify their statements by actual experience along the lines prescribed by them. The truths inculcated in them are not mere theories, but facts, and as such are invulnerable.

THE METHODOLOGY OF THE UPANIṢADS

The Upaniṣads develop ideas that are in germ in the Saṁhitās, and in so doing refine them and raise them to a higher level. For instance, heaven looms large in the Saṁhitās. People want to go there after death under the belief that they will get everlasting joy uncontaminated by sorrow. And the performance of sacrifices is thought to be the chief means of attaining heaven. The Upaniṣads take into consideration this desire on the part of man for prolonged enjoyment, but they show the fallacy of clinging to heaven as a permanent source of bliss. They tell him that the joys of heaven, like all other joys, are also evanescent ; so he must look elsewhere for abiding bliss, and yet it is right within his reach.

Again, coming to the means, the Upaniṣads do not snatch away all those aids to which man has been accustomed ; they only substitute better forms of them. For example, the horse-sacrifice was considered the greatest of sacrifices. So the Upaniṣads do not taboo it, but show a better way to perform it. Instead of the ordinary horse that is sacrificed, they point out one 'whose head is the dawn, whose eye is the sun, . . . whose back is the heaven,' and so on (*Bṛ. U.*, I. 1. 1). Instead of the common sacrificial fire in which offerings are made, a number of extraordinary fires are pointed out, beginning with the heaven, which has 'the sun as its fuel, the solar rays as its smoke, the moon as its cinder,' and so on (*Chā. U.*, V. 4. 1). The aim is gradually to withdraw the aspirant's mind from external things and direct it inwards—to make him more and more introspective, so that he may get rid of his dependence on the objective world. This is the method of *upāsanā* or meditation, which occupies an intermediate position between ceremonial worship at one end and the highest philosophical abstraction at the other. It is already in vogue in the Āraṇyakas. The principle underlying it is that man, with all his imperfections, is to be led step by step from his naive conceptions of things to the realization of the highest Truth. Accordingly, in many of the Upaniṣads, we find some portion of them devoted to *upāsanās* of various kinds, so that there may be a choice of symbols to suit different temperaments and capacities. But the emphasis is always on the eternal principles, which it is the aim of the Upaniṣads to teach, and to which all other things are subsidiary.

THE THEME OF THE UPANIṢADS

The central theme of the Upaniṣads is to seek unity in the midst of diversity. 'What is that by knowing which everything in this universe is known?' asks the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (I.1.3). The answer to it is found in the conception of God or Brahman ('the Greatest') as the ultimate Cause of the universe, 'from whom indeed these beings are born, through whom they live, and unto whom they return and merge in' (*Tai. U.*, III. 1). Since the effect is not different from the cause, it is possible to know the universe by knowing Brahman, 'as by knowing one lump of clay all that is made of clay is known ; for the modification is but an effort of speech, a name, and the only reality in it is clay' (*Chā. U.*, VI. 1. 4). Two things should be noted here. The first is that the universe is not considered to have come out of zero or non-existence. The nihilistic view that it has come out of nothing is put forward only as a *prima facie* proposition, which is at once set aside as absurd in favour of the correct view: 'Indeed this universe, my child, was previously Existence alone, one only without a second' (*Chā. U.*, VI. 2. 1-2). Hence it would be entirely misleading to render the word '*sṛṣṭi*',

occurring in texts describing the manifestation of the world, as 'creation', which, as commonly used, suggests something coming out of nothing. The nearest equivalent would be 'projection'. The universe has emanated from God, a positive entity, not from nothing. The second thing to be noted is that the universe is conceived as returning in the end to God, the source from which it sprang.

Thus, even in the dim ages of the Upaniṣads, not only evolution, which is the watchword of modern science, but also involution, the retrograde march of the universe to its primal state, was whole-heartedly believed in. In this latter point, the Upaniṣads seem to have gone ahead of science. So not only have they no ground for quarrel with science, but on the contrary they welcome its contributions towards a better understanding of their ancient discoveries by the modern mind. The religion of the Upaniṣads is *par excellence* a scientific religion.

SYSTEMS OF PHILOSOPHIES BASED ON THE UPANIṢADS

But though the universe is declared to have come out of God, the human soul or Ātman, which is really the starting point of all our enquiry, is nowhere stated to be an emanation from Him. The Upaniṣads always speak of it as an eternal verity. It is never an effect, never a part of the universe, but co-existent with God Himself. 'The intelligent One is never born nor dies, it is neither produced from anything nor itself produces anything; it is birthless, eternal, undecaying, and ancient. It does not die with the death of the body' (*Ka. U.*, II.18). Naturally, the question of its relation to Brahman arises. And it is here that difficulties present themselves. For the Upaniṣads abound in statements that are apparently contradictory in their nature. Some describe the soul as essentially different from God: God is omnipotent and omniscient, but the soul has limited power and knowledge; God is all-pervading, but the soul is confined to the body and goes from one world to another; God is absolute bliss, but the soul is sometimes happy and sometimes miserable; God is inactive, but the soul is active; God is the goal, but the soul is the seeker; and so on. There are other texts that describe the essential identity of the two. In between these two extreme positions, there are varieties of other views. But all these divergent conceptions are based on the Upaniṣads. Śaṅkarācārya is the great exponent of the identity between Jīva (Ātman) and Brahman, the doctrine of Advaitavāda or monism. Of the diametrically opposite view, Dvaitavāda or dualism, which holds the two entities to be eternally separate, we may take Madhvācārya as the typical representative. Among the upholders of intermediate positions, Rāmānujācārya stands prominent with his Viśiṣṭādvaitavāda or qualified monism. One point, however, we must bear

in mind in connection with these different schools of thought. None of the great men chiefly associated with them were the originators of these schools. They were merely the outstanding spokesmen of those systems, which had been traditionally handed down from time immemorial in India.

The same thing holds good of the six systems of Indian philosophy, viz. Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika, Sāṁkhya and Yoga, Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā and Vedānta. None of the great sages with whom these are associated were their founders; they were simply their best expounders or codifiers. Although every one of these six systems claims to derive its authority from the Upaniṣads, yet it is the Vedānta that bases itself wholly on them. The *Brahma-Sūtra* of Bādarāyaṇa seeks to collect and systematize the teachings of the Upaniṣads and build a full-fledged philosophy on them. In the Upaniṣads the highest truths are given out as they were glimpsed by the *ṛṣis*. Being direct communications, as it were, of actual experiences just as they came, they often lack that systematic arrangement which can be expected of leisurely deliberation. This task of introducing order into the Upaniṣadic thought-pictures was taken up by Bādarāyaṇa. But the too cryptic way of writing, which was unfortunately the fashion with the composers of aphorisms (*sūtras*), has made it impossible for any one to know with certainty what exactly his meaning was, and as a consequence the *Brahma-Sūtra* also has suffered the same fate in the hands of the commentators as the Upaniṣads, each one trying to interpret the aphorisms in his own way. So we have all those isms cropping up also from Bādarāyaṇa's masterly work—the book that was intended to present the salient thoughts of the Upaniṣads in a lucid and methodical way!

CONFLICTING INTERPRETATIONS

Every one of the commentators seems to have been obsessed with the idea that the whole literature of the Upaniṣads speaks only one thing, be it monism, dualism, qualified monism, or whatever else it may be, and according to his own predilections and training he seeks to bring out that one thing from the whole range of the Upaniṣads. They are hardly to blame; being ardent enthusiasts of a particular system, they could not entertain the notion that there might be many facets to a truth, and that other people's points of view might be just as true as their own. So they have put forward their own reading of the truth as the only possible one. The effect of holding such one-sided views is that a dualistic commentator finds no trouble with passages that clearly have a dualistic import, but when he comes to those texts, perhaps in the same Upaniṣad, that clash with his line of thought, being palpably monistic in their trend, he is at a loss to explain

them, and the only way he can dispose of them is by twisting their meaning —trying to square a circle. The result is a travesty of truth. The same thing applies to the monistic commentator also, as indeed to those of any particular denomination.

Taking it for granted that the monistic position is the soundest and explains all other positions effectively, and admitting that it comes nearer the mark than any other school, is that any reason for torturing texts that will not bear the monistic interpretation? Would it not be better to find out a way whereby the passage in question can fit in, as it is, with the rest of the teachings? Take, for instance, this passage from the *Kaṭha* (II.23): 'This Ātman is not to be attained through study of the Vedas, nor through intelligence, nor through much hearing. It is attainable (*labhyaḥ*) by him (*tena*), whomsoever (*yameva*) it (*eṣa*) chooses ; to him this Ātman manifests its form'—a clearly dualistic passage. But even a genius like Śaṅkara has made the hopeless attempt of explaining the second sentence thus: *yameva*, 'whomsoever', i.e. his own soul, *eṣa*, 'this' aspirant, 'chooses' or prays to, *tena*, 'by that' Ātman who prays, the Ātman himself, *labhyaḥ*, 'is attained' or known, and he who has no desires prays only to himself ; that is to say, the Ātman is attained by the Ātman. Any one with even a cursory knowledge of Sanskrit will see the incongruity of explaining *yameva* as 'his own soul'—as if there were many such to choose from! Besides, the correlation between *yameva* and *tena* is entirely ignored in the above explanation, which interprets the former as the object prayed to and the latter as the person praying. The same verse also occurs in the *Muṇḍaka* (III.2.3), where Śaṅkara explains *tena* as 'by that choice or desire to attain', which drops the correlation altogether. Our object in dealing with this passage at some length is to show that while, in our wanderings through the Upaniṣads, we must follow the commentators, particularly Śaṅkara, the foremost of them, we should, at the same time, keep our eyes open to detect text-torturing, where any such occurs.

If the monistic commentator is sometimes put to straits by dualistic passages, his brothers of the dualistic persuasion, in any of its forms, are faced with difficulties on many more occasions by monistic passages that defy all their powers of sophism. No amount of casuistry is of any avail against the unmistakable *advaitic* import of such texts as '*Ahaṁ Brahmāsmi*' (I am Brahman: *Bṛ. U.*, I.4.10), '*Tattvamasi*' (Thou art That: *Chā. U.*, VI.8.7), '*Ayamātmā Brahma*' (This Self is Brahman: *Mā. U.*, 2), '*Sarvaṁ khalvidaṁ Brahma*' (All this is verily Brahman: *Chā. U.*, III.14.1), and 'He goes from death to death who sees diversity in This' (*Ka. U.*, IV.11 ; *Bṛ. U.*, IV.4.19). We need not multiply instances.

CORRECT APPROACH TO THE UPANIṢADIC TEACHINGS

What then is the proper attitude? It is to understand that different parts of the Upaniṣads express different phases of the same Truth, according to the degree of realization on the part of the seer. Being intended for humanity at large, among whom there is an infinite variety of gradations as regards the capacity for understanding as well as temperamental differences, the Śruti (scripture), like an affectionate mother, prescribes different courses for different people. She does not give us one standard dish that we must all eat, whether it suits us or not. That would be to no purpose. So we have in the Upaniṣads a progressive course of instruction suited to different aptitudes and tastes. But is this possible? Can truth be various? If one religion or philosophy is true, then all other religions and philosophies must necessarily be false. This seems to be the prevailing notion even among the most cultured. And this it is that has been at the root of all recrimination, fighting, and bloodshed in the name of religion all over the world in times past; and, unfortunately, things are no better today. Even on the soil of India, where in days of hoary antiquity the prophetic eye of the Vedic sage caught a vision of the unity of all life, so beautifully expressed in the words '*Ekaṁ Sat, viprā bahudhā vadanti*' (Existence is One, sages call it variously),[3] religious feuds are still in evidence. This intolerance persists, although sage after sage has reiterated the message for our benefit. Nay, the Lord Himself, as Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the greatest expounder of the Upaniṣads, has echoed those words in the memorable *Lord's Song*: 'Howsoever people may take refuge in Me, I accept them just that way. In every way, O Arjuna, they follow My path' (*Gītā*, IV.11). And within living memory Sri Ramakrishna emphasized the same idea in his characteristic style, 'Each faith is a path to God'. Yet we seem to behave no better. But the truth is that—unity and not difference. We have to bring home to ourselves this cardinal teaching of the Upaniṣads.

There is a way to harmonize the apparently conflicting statements. We find it so difficult to do this because we are so far removed from the age when the Upaniṣads were recorded; we are out of touch with the technique that was quite familiar in ancient India. We are referring to what is called the *Arundhatī-darśana-nyāya*, 'the method of spotting Arundhatī', a tiny-looking star, which even today the Brāhmaṇa bride has to see at the time of marriage. The practice is first to show her a bright star somewhere near Arundhatī and tell her that it is Arundhatī. When she has seen it, she is told that that is not the star, but another near it. And this process is repeated till she comes to the real Arundhatī. We moderns would probably have chosen a different method and called a spade a spade. But this was

[3] *Ṛ.V.*, I.164.46.

not the method of the ancient sages. Therefore in trying to understand them we had better familiarize ourselves with their method, instead of quarrelling with them over it. The analogy, applied to the point at issue, would mean that we have to accept the various theories put forward in the Upaniṣads as so many presentations of the same Truth from different angles. In other words, we have to approach the subject psychologically, rather than logically.

The common illustration of the rope and the snake will help us to understand how it is that we see only one aspect of Reality at any particular time. When in the dark we mistake a rope for a snake, for us the rope has altogether vanished, and only the snake remains. But when with the help of a light we see the rope as it is in truth, then there is no longer a snake, but only the rope. So the two are never present to us at the same time. Similarly, for us ordinary people who see duality, there is no unity; but the perfected man sees only unity—for him there is no duality. This is the paradox of existence. If we understand it, then there will be no antagonism between statements as widely divergent as monistic and dualistic, since they will be understood as referring to individuals at different levels of thought, or to different mental conditions of the same individual even. This is what is meant by Adhikārivāda, the need of qualifications for one aspiring to attain the supreme Knowledge.

THE ĀTMAN OR SOUL

We shall now deal with the principal teachings of the Upaniṣads, some of which have been hinted at already. Soul, God, and Nature form the three main topics of these teachings. Let us begin with the soul. The eternal problem of problems, the mystery of death, has been solved once for all in the Upaniṣads. The *Kaṭha*, for instance, starts with that question. A little boy, Naciketas by name, meets Yama, the ruler of the other world, face to face and extorts from him an effective solution of the whole riddle of life after death. The gist of it is that in addition to the body, which we all see, there is a soul (Ātman), which is distinct from, and independent of, the organs, sensory and motor, from the mind in its twofold aspect of vague consideration and determination (*manas* and *buddhi*), and from the vital force with its different functions; that the soul, being immaterial and uncreated, is indestructible and as such outlives the body; that it has normally three states—waking, dream, and deep sleep; that it goes after death to different worlds, high and low, according to its past work and knowledge, and may return to this world. In connection with this, the nature of the soul is also discussed, the conclusion being that its limitations are only for a time, that is, as long as it is under the spell of ignorance, which,

again, is self-imposed; that in reality it is omnipotent, omnipresent, and omniscient, and is essentially identical with God or Brahman.

These are the teachings, in a nutshell, of all the Upaniṣads regarding the soul. Some part of these teachings is elaborated more in one Upaniṣad than in another, often in very picturesque language. Take, for instance, the *Kaṭha* (III.3-4, 10-11): 'Know the soul as the rider, the body as the chariot, the intellect as the charioteer, and *manas* as the reins. The organs are called the horses, and the sense-objects the roads for them. The soul joined to the body, organs, and mind is designated by the sages as the experiencer (*bhoktṛ*). . . . *Arthas* (sense-objects) are higher than the *indriyas* (sense-organs), *manas* is higher than the objects, *buddhi* (intellect) is higher than that, *mahat* (cosmic intelligence or Hiraṇyagarbha) is higher than the intellect, *avyakta* (the unmanifested, the causal state of the universe) is higher than *mahat,* and Puruṣa or Ātman (the infinite Being) is higher than the unmanifested. There is nothing higher than Puruṣa. That is the limit, the supreme goal.' Here we have a series of entities arranged according to their increasing subtlety, beginning with the sense-objects, passing through the different constituents of the human body and mind, and ending with the Ātman, which is clearly stated to be the highest entity that exists, thereby showing its oneness with God. It should be noted that all the items in the series, except the soul, are material. Śaṅkara, in explaining how the sense-objects—odour, taste, colour, touch, and sound—are superior to the organs, significantly observes that the latter are 'the effects of the former, being fashioned by the objects for their own revelation'. The mind, according to the Upaniṣads, is also material, only it is finer than the gross objects that compose the body. Therefore the question of its relation to the body is no puzzle to the Hindus, as it is to students of western philosophy, which treats the mind as immaterial and defines it as 'that which is not matter'.

REINCARNATION AND KARMA

Man lives after death. What happens to the soul after it leaves the body? 'Some, in order to get a body, enter into the womb, and others into stationary objects (plants etc.), according to their past work and their knowledge' (*Ka. U.*, V.7). The idea of retrogression into subhuman states of existence, as a result of bad deeds, frightens many a person. But since the soul is eternal, and its desires infinite in number, it stands to reason that until they are exhausted, or given up, we must have to work them out, and that different types of desires would require different kinds of bodies for their satisfaction. If they are such that their fulfilment would be possible neither in an angelic nor in a human body, but in an animal body, or

something still lower—for even plants were known to be living and sentient by the ancient sages of India—, it would accelerate the progress of the soul if it is born in a suitable body amid proper enviornments, however queer they may appear to us. So the theory of reincarnation is thoroughly rational, and it, together with the law of Karma (which says, 'as you sow, so you must reap'), to which it is a corollary, gives man something definite to stand upon, instead of ever being at the mercy of extraneous forces. For his present condition he has only himself to thank or to blame. There is no chance for his pleading alibi. The moral law is inexorable.

REAL NATURE OF THE SOUL

The references to Ātman in the Upaniṣads have a particular characteristic. They often begin with the individual aspect of it—because that is how we all know ourselves—and presently raise it to the status of the supreme Self, in order to show that that is its real nature. Sometimes the transition is so sudden that it is presented in the same short dictum, as in '*So'ham*' (I am He); and one is perplexed to relate the two parts of the sentence, the subject and the predicate, together. But that is the chief task of the Upaniṣads. They want to remove our ingrained misconceptions and rehabilitate us in our true status. So the popular notion is put first, and this is then co-ordinated with the truth as it is.

The smallest of the important Upaniṣads, the *Māṇḍūkya*, describes the different states of the soul. In the waking state, it experiences the outside world ; in dreams, the internal world of mind ; and in deep sleep, only its natural bliss. In these three lower states it is called *viśva, taijasa*, and *prājña*, respectively. Then its *turīya* (lit. fourth) or transcendent state is described by the negation of all attributes characteristic of the other three states as follows: 'Having neither internal nor external experience nor both combined, nor mere consciousness either, neither (fully) conscious nor unconscious, invisible, incapable of being dealt with or seized, without indications, unthinkable, unnamable, to be traced only through the abiding notion of the one Self, where the phenomenal world is at rest, serene, gracious, free from duality, it is considered the fourth. That is the Ātman, that is to be known' (*Mā. U.*, 7). This is the *kūṭastha* or immutable aspect of the Self, which is identical with the unconditioned Brahman, the impersonal God. We shall now pass on to the next topic, God.

BRAHMAN OR GOD

Let us begin with this beautiful story from the *Kena Upaniṣad* (III-IV.1): 'Brahman won a victory for the gods, who glorified themselves at this victory of Brahman. They thought, "Ours is this victory, ours indeed

this glory". Brahman understood their mind and appeared before them. They did not know who it was. They said to Fire, "Go and find out what this venerable thing is". "All right", said he, and approached it. Brahman said to him, "Who are you?" He said, "I am Fire, I am Jātavedas". "Ah, and what is your power?" "I can burn everything there is in this world." Brahman put a straw before him saying, "Burn it". He rushed towards it with all speed, but could not burn it. He thereupon returned (to the gods) and said, "I could not find out what this venerable thing is". Then they asked Air to do the same. When he approached, Brahman said to him, "Who are you?" He replied, "I am Air, I am Mātariśvan". "Is that so, and what is your power?" "I can seize whatever there is in this world." Brahman put a straw before him saying, "Seize it". He, too, rushed towards it with all speed, but was unable to seize it. At this he returned and reported his failure to the gods. Then they deputed Indra (their king). As soon as he approached, Brahman disappeared (without even accosting him). Indra (humbled) saw in that very space an exceedingly beautiful woman, Umā, the daughter of Himavat, and said to her, "What is this venerable thing?" She said, "Brahman. It was at His victory that you glorified yourselves". Then he understood it was Brahman.'

PERSONAL AND IMPERSONAL ASPECTS OF GOD

Brahman of the Upaniṣads, however, is both personal and impersonal (*saguṇa* and *nirguṇa*). In the former aspect, which corresponds to the God of dualistic religions like Christianity and Islam, 'He is the lord of all, omniscient, the internal Ruler. He is the cause of all; from Him indeed all beings proceed and in Him they merge'[4] (*Mā. U.*, 6). Brahman is the ruler of the universe. He projects it, maintains it, and dissolves it at the end. He guides the destinies of the multitudinous beings that dwell in it. He rewards the good according to their merits, leading them to prosperity or liberation, and He also punishes the wicked according to their misdeeds. He is termed Īśvara, whose body is the sum-total of all bodies in the universe, and whose mind is the aggregate of all minds—in which latter phases He is called Virāj and Hiraṇyagarbha respectively. Through all hands He works, through all feet He walks, through all eyes He sees, through all ears He hears.

UNITY OF BRAHMAN AND ĀTMAN

But in His impersonal aspect, Brahman is devoid of all attributes. He is the eternal witness, 'the ear of the ear, the mind of the mind, the vocal

[4] All this, it may be noted, is said of the soul in a state of deep sleep—which brings out the underlying oneness of Brahman and Ātman.

organ of the vocal organ, the vital force of the vital force, the eye of the eye' (*Ke. U.*, I.2). He is Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, Bliss Absolute. These are not His attributes, which sometimes may come and sometimes may go, but His very essence. 'There the sun shines not, nor the moon and stars, nor this lightning; of what account is this fire? He alone shining, everything shines after; through His lustre all this shines' (*Ka. U.*, V.15; *Mu. U.*, II.2.10; *Śve. U.*, VI.14). The impersonal God can only be indicated by the negation of all attributes. 'It is neither gross nor minute, neither short nor long, neither redness nor moisture, neither shadow nor darkness, neither air nor ether, neither taste nor smell, unattached, non-luminous, without eyes or ears, without the vocal organ or mind, without the vital force or mouth, not a measure, and without interior or exterior. It does not eat anything, nor is it eaten by anybody' (*Bṛ. U.*, III.8.8).

And with this impersonal God the individual soul is fundamentally identical. Their apparent difference, but essential unity, is admirably presented in the following oft-quoted *mantras*: 'Two birds of beautiful plumage (the soul and God), who are friends and always joined together, cling to the same tree (the body). One of them (the soul) eats sweet (and bitter) fruits (experiences the results of its past work), but the other only watches without eating. Buried in the selfsame tree (wholly identified with the body), the infinite Being (Puruṣa, the soul) is overwhelmed by his impotence and suffers. But when he beholds the other, the Lord, the adorable One, and the glory (the world) as His, he is free from grief' (*Mu. U.*, III.1.1-2). Nothing short of a realization of identity can banish all grief and misery, for 'a second entity indeed causes fear' (*Bṛ. U.*, I.4.2).

No contradiction is involved in this. If we remember what has been stated a little earlier, viz. that the teachings of the Upaniṣads are relative to the conditions of the aspirant's mind, we shall find no difficulty in harmonizing these positions. So long as we consider ourselves embodied beings, we live in a world, and this world has its ruler. In other words, so long as we are persons, the personal God exists for us. But when we transcend the limitations of our personality, which the Upaniṣads assure us we can if we follow their directions, the personal God as well as the world vanishes for us, and only the impersonal God remains, and we are one with That. Then there is no more duality, but Existence Absolute. It is in this sense that the Jīva (soul) is one with Brahman, not that it, with all its limitations, is at any given moment identical with Brahman in all His aspects. The clay mouse is not the clay elephant; but dissolved in water, both become clay. Naturally therefore, all the power, knowledge, and bliss of God exist potentially in the soul. If they were not there, they

would never be manifested, as they do in the perfected sage. The moment its self-hypnotism is gone, the divinity that is always latent in it would manifest itself.

We must bear in mind that when the Upaniṣads speak of evolution, they refer only to our material part, the body—be it gross or fine—and never to the soul. It is this outer part, the covering or 'sheath' (*kośa*) as it is called, which becomes better and better through experience, in other words, evolves. But the soul in its essence remains unchanged; only it *manifests* itself more and more through these bodies. So between an amoeba and a Buddha or a Christ there is a world of difference as regards the body, but none whatsoever as regards the essence, the soul, which is identical. Of course, through a Christ's body we see much more of the soul than through the amoeba, but the difference is only in the degree of manifestation, like the same sun peering through a thin or a thick veil of clouds.

Modern science is wrong in its hypothesis that man has evolved from the ape. According to the Upaniṣads, he is descended from God. A simple illustration will show where the mistake lies. Suppose there is an endless chain with alternate white and black links. Now, which is the beginning? He who begins with a black link goes on repeating black—white, black—white, and so on. But he who starts with a white link repeats white—black, white—black, and so on. Nature presents both phenomena—the movement from the subtle to the gross and back from the gross to the subtle. The former is the downward course of degradation, and the latter is the upward course of elevation. Now, which of the two views appeals more to reason? Which explains the largest number of phenomena by a reference to their nature? Obviously the Upaniṣadic view. For we cannot get out of a machine anything that we have not already put into it. The ape cannot produce a sage. But the reverse is possible on account of self-hypnotization.

From what has been stated above, it is easy to settle the question whether the soul is one or multiple. In the state of ignorance one and the same Ātman appears as many, the difference being caused by the adjuncts (*upādhis*), viz. the body and mind, which are themselves the creation of ignorance. The very idea of manifoldness is an illusion, as a person while dreaming sees himself as many. But when the dream breaks, he finds himself the only reality in it. Similarly, in the state of realization there is absolute unity.

NATURE OR UNIVERSE

Let us now pass on to Nature. It too, like the soul, is held to be without beginning, but not exactly in the same sense; for the soul has

no origin in the absolute sense of the word, because it is immaterial and therefore beyond space, time, and causation (*deśa-kāla-nimitta*), under which everything material exists. All change is in time; so how can it affect the soul? But the universe, being material, must have a beginning. Nevertheless, the Śruti speaks of it as beginningless, because we cannot trace its beginning. It is analogous to the tree and the seed—which comes first, the tree or the seed? The tree presupposes the seed, and there can be no seed without the tree. So the universe extends backwards like an infinite chain, and whenever we hear of its origin, it only means the beginning of a cycle (*kalpa*). Says the *Muṇḍaka* (I.1.7): 'As a spider projects and withdraws (its web), as herbs grow on earth, or hair comes on a living person, so does this universe here proceed from the Immutable.' In the first illustration, that of the spider, we are given a hint about the dissolution also of the universe.

The same Upaniṣad (II.1) describes the order of manifestation thus: 'From this very Ātman, which is identical with That (Brahman), the ether was produced, from the ether air, from air fire, from fire water, from water earth.' The details have been worked out later by the philosophers on the basis of texts scattered here and there. The ether has only one property, viz. sound; air has the additional property of touch; fire has a third property, colour; water a fourth one, taste; and earth has in addition the property of smell—the idea being that the properties of the cause are transmitted to the effects. These elements combine in different proportions to produce all bodies, and also minds. Nay, all the entities, beginning from the sense-objects and ending with Puruṣa, that have been enumerated earlier in the quotation from the *Kaṭha* (III.10-11), are all, excepting the Puruṣa, the result of this kind of combination. God's part in it as the efficient (as well as the material) cause of the universe is described in the following passage: 'He desired, "Let me be many, let me multiply". He reflected, and, after reflection, He projected all this—whatever there is. Having projected it, He entered into that very thing, and became the gross and the subtle' (*Tai. U.*, II.6).

The dissolution of the universe, as may be expected, proceeds in the inverse order, each succeeding element dissolving in its cause, the preceding element, till there is no vestige left of the manifested universe with name and form, and Brahman alone remains. This is the state of *pralaya* or dissolution, as opposed to *sṛṣṭi* or projection, both of which are described in great detail in the Purāṇas and other Smṛtis. Thus the world alternately comes out and goes back, with all the infinite number of beings of various grades that dwell in it. This is the Lord's eternal play.

ESCHATOLOGY AND EMANCIPATION

There are various worlds in the universe, the highest of which is that of (Saguṇa) Brahman (*Brahmaloka*). The Upaniṣads (e.g. *Chā. U.*, IV.15.5, V.10.1-8 ; *Bṛ. U.*, VI.2.14-16 ; *Kauṣītaki U.*, I.2-4) describe the journey of man after death to these various worlds according to his deserts. There are two routes, one of which is called the path of the gods (*devayāna*) and the other that of the manes (*pitṛyāna*), along which the soul is led by various angel guides. Those that have lived pure lives devoted to meditation and truthfulness go by the former route, and after reaching the blissful world of Brahman, they continue their meditations, become perfect, and ultimately merge in the supreme (Nirguṇa) Brahman, transcending all worlds. This is called *krama-mukti*, or gradual emancipation. But those who have done some good deeds mechanically, follow the second route ; they reach the world of the moon and, living there and enjoying the fruits of their good deeds, come back, to be reborn as men. It may take them a very long time to get a favourable opportunity for this. Those who have a balance of good deeds in their favour are soon born in good families ; while those who have a store of bad deeds to work out are born in low families, or go further down to the state of lower animals. But those who have done neither, remain on earth, and are born very low in the scale of life.

To those who are burning with the desire for liberation, the way of gradual emancipation (*krama-mukti*), set forth above, may appear to be very disconcerting. For these fortunate few, who sincerely want to go straight to the haven of everlasting peace, the Upaniṣads prescribe a much speedier way, which can be traversed even in one lifetime. The moment a person realizes his identity with Brahman, the whole relative universe disappears for him. Then there is no more coming or going in his case. 'His organs do not depart. Having been nothing but Brahman, he is merged in Brahman' (*Bṛ. U.*, IV.4.6). 'He who knows that supreme Brahman verily becomes Brahman' (*Mu. U.*, III.2.9). In fact, it is not the real objective of the Śruti to describe these journeys to the various worlds or, for that matter, the order of projection of the universe itself. All that the Śruti wants is to make us realize our unity with Brahman. Therefore, if we are really disgusted with this transitory world, let us plunge into a life and death struggle for realization, without frittering away our energies in vain pursuits. 'Knowing Him alone one transcends death. There is no other way to go by' (*Śve. U.*, III.8, VI.15). So we see that the universe, though without a beginning, ends with the realization of Brahman.

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

Various means have been recommended by the Upaniṣads for leading us to our destination. They all centre round self-abnegation. 'After examining (the transitoriness of) the worlds attained through rites, a Brāhmaṇa should cultivate a spirit of renunciation, (considering that) that which is not produced (i.e. is eternal) cannot be attained through work' (*Mu. U.*, I.2.12). Here we find mention of two of the four great aids to a spiritual life enumerated in the Vedānta philosophy, viz. discrimination and renunciation (*viveka* and *vairāgya*). The world is full of allurements, but they are short-lived. Let us turn our gaze away from them to the supreme Self, which is never separated from us. Let us give up our petty desires and be of subdued minds, *dhīra*—an important word, which we come across again and again in the Upaniṣads.

'He who is devoid of intelligence, unmindful, and always impure never attains that status (of Brahman), and transmigrates. But he who is intelligent, alert, and always pure attains that status from which he is no more born. . . . The intelligent man should merge his speech (i.e. all organs) in the mind, the mind in the intellect, the intellect in cosmic intelligence, and that again in the placid Self (*śānta-ātman*)' (*Ka. U.*, III.7-8, 13). It will be noticed that the process of absorption here recommended is aptly in the inverse order to that of manifestation.

Concentration with the help of *Om* is beautifully portrayed in the following verses: 'Taking the great weapon, the bow, mentioned in the Upaniṣads, fix the arrow sharpened by meditation. Drawing it with the mind rapt in the Immutable, pierce, my boy, that target, that very Immutable. *Om* is the bow, the soul is the arrow, and Brahman is called its target. One must pierce It with a concentrated mind, and become, like the arrow, one with It' (*Mu. U.*, II.2.3-4).

'Therefore, he who knows it as such becomes self-possessed, calm, withdrawn into himself, enduring, and concentrated, and sees the Self in his own self (the body); he sees all as the Self' (*Bṛ. U.*, IV.4.23). Here we are given five of the six 'assets' for an aspirant—*śama, dama, uparati, titikṣā,* and *samādhāna*—, the other item being faith (*śraddhā*), that rare quality of being true to oneself which inspired Naciketas.

Last, but not the least, of the great requisites for realization is the yearning for liberation (*mumukṣutva*). It is the driving force in the spiritual path. To quote again from the *Muṇḍaka* (I.2.12), 'With a view to realizing that (Brahman), he must, with faggots in his hands, approach a teacher who is versed in the Vedas and steadfastly devoted to Brahman'. This not only indicates the yearning for liberation, but also enjoins that one must learn the great truths of the Upaniṣads from a qualified teacher, who is necessarily

sinless and unselfish, by serving him with all humility and devotion. This method is laid down in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, where Yājñavalkya, after describing to his spiritual-minded wife how everything in the world is held dear because of the Ātman, says, 'The Ātman, my dear Maitreyī, should be realized—should be heard of, reflected on, and meditated upon. By the realization of the Ātman . . . all this is known' (II.4.5; IV.5.6). The aspirant should then reflect on the meaning of what he has heard, weigh it in his mind from all angles to get an intellectual conviction of it, and then sit down to meditate on it—concentrate on it to the exclusion of all other thoughts, till he becomes one with the idea. Though the path is 'sharp as the blade of a razor', yet, through the grace of the Lord and his teacher, he is sure to succeed if he perseveres. 'To the noble soul who has supreme devotion to Brahman and also to his teacher, these truths that have been taught surely manifest themselves' (*Śve. U.*, VI.23).

THE MESSAGE OF THE UPANIṢADS

From the above short sketch the reader may have got a glimpse of the treasures that are strewn broadcast in the Upaniṣads. The value of these ancient records for all seekers after truth can scarcely be over-estimated. Their message of strength, fearlessness, and hope is as necessary for us now as it was for those who lived in the past. Their appeal is universal, for they probe the very depths of the inner being of man. The Upaniṣads call upon every man and woman, in whatever station of life, to stand up and assert their divine heritage. In this they recognize no limits, geographical, racial, or any other. They are the greatest unifying factor in the world for all time. They break all the fetters of mankind and raise men to their true status as 'children of immortality' (*Śve. U.*, II.5). 'The regeneration of man the brute into man the God' is their ambitious programme. They are not unethical, as, on account of their not preaching sin, they are supposed to be by some, but supra-ethical. They only, of all the religious literatures of the world, give us the *rationale* of morality—why we should do good to others. Because we are all one. In helping others, we help ourselves; and in hurting them, we hurt none but ourselves.

The Upaniṣads help us to grasp the significance of the lives and teachings of the great prophets of all religions. In their light, we understand that Christ's exhortation, 'Love thy neighbour as thyself', was not a mere figure of speech. We *must* love him, for he, like the rest of the world, is literally our Self.

The Upaniṣads unflinchingly speak out truths, regardless of consequences. They do not even spare themselves. 'After studying the scriptures and realizing the Truth, an intelligent person should discard them entirely,

as one who cares for the rice does with the chaff' (*Amṛtabindu U.*, 18). They declare that it is open to any one to become a *ṛṣi*, a perfected saint. The Upaniṣads are the Magna Charta of human rights. They ask us to desist from our mad search for happiness in the outside world; for the musk-deer will never find the source of that fragrance, which drives him hither and thither, outside of himself. 'There is no bliss in finite things, the Infinite alone is bliss' (*Chā. U.*, VII.23). Whatever bliss there is, is borrowed from the Self. 'On a particle of this very bliss other beings live' (*Bṛ. U.*, IV.3.32). No wonder Schopenhauer remarked: 'In the whole world there is no study so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Upaniṣads. It has been the solace of my life—it will be the solace of my death.'

The goal as well as the way has been pointed out to us by the Upaniṣads: 'Know that one Ātman alone, and give up all other talk. This is the bridge to immortality' (*Mu. U.*, II.2.5). It is now left to us to move on. Let us not be overwhelmed with the thought that we are powerless. Are we not potentially the infinite Spirit whose glories even the Vedas can at best only indicate negatively by the method of *neti neti* (not this, not this)? In the words of Swami Vivekananda, 'This infinite power of the Spirit brought to bear upon matter evolves material development, made to act upon thought evolves intellectuality, and made to act upon itself makes of man a god.' We must struggle patiently, perseveringly. The well-being of the modern world depends on a proper understanding of the Upaniṣadic teachings and on their sincere application to the practical problems of our daily life. Thus only can materiality, which is the common enemy of the world, be conquered, and love, instead of hate, be our guiding principle. Even age-long darkness, as Sri Ramakrishna used to say, disappears as soon as a light is brought in. It behoves us, like true followers of the Upaniṣads, to assert our birthright and, armed with the strength of realization, make a determined effort to establish the reign of peace and harmony on earth.

20

MYSTICAL APPROACH IN THE UPANIṢADS

THE Upaniṣads form the basis of Hindu thought and spirituality. Although they have not given any definite philosophy in the light of modern thought, still the important structures of Indian thought owe their origin and their appeal to the deeper realization of the spirit of the Upaniṣads. They attract our minds by their sublime simplicity and rich suggestiveness. The images which they apply are sometimes poetic and mystical. They reveal profound flashes of thought and insight, but there is no systematic development of philosophical ideas in them.

There are different types of Upaniṣads, and from the differences in their teachings, it can easily be inferred that their origin is not simultaneous. The Upaniṣads claim to record the intuitive realizations of the great seers of different periods. Hence all of them do not record the same methods of realization. But this should not lead us to suppose that the Upaniṣads differ among themselves by presenting divergent ideas of Truth. The fundamental object of spiritual life has always been the same, although emphasis has been laid upon different approaches and disciplines. And it must be so, for the approach to Truth must suit the psychic make-up of our being; and unless there is the capacity and the patience to continue the search up to the end, the finest and deepest layer of our being must remain unfathomed. Since the Upaniṣads insist more on the direct apprehension of Truth, they have laid deep stress on psychic unfolding. A careful perusal of the Upaniṣadic texts leaves the impression upon the mind that there is a method of psychic development which finally leads us to the realization of the ultimate Truth.

REASON AND INTUITION

Indeed, we come across in different places in the Upaniṣads sublime philosophic teachings and dissertations, but their appeal lies more in categorically defining the nature of Truth than in establishing it in terms of logic. But this absence of logic does not take away from their value, for the human soul in its pursuit of Truth transcends conceptual thinking. Logic has its place in reasoning; but reasoning only indicates its inability to grasp Reality and prepares us for discovering another pathway to Truth.

Intuition follows dialectics. Yājñavalkya anticipated long before Plato the importance of intuition. But intuition has different phases, since it does not always arise from the same part of our being. We may distinguish

these intuitions as pre-reflective and post-reflective, sub-conceptual and supra-conceptual, and sub-mental and supra-mental. It has been customary to distinguish and classify spiritual experiences as (1) the experience of the Absolute; and (2) the experience of the cosmic Unity.[1] But these are supra-mental and supra-conceptual experiences. They indeed represent philosophic intuitions of different orders. Besides these intuitions of the soul, the Upaniṣads also take into account vital and psychic intuitions. We find therefore different kinds of *upāsanās* (meditations) laid down in the Upaniṣads.

INTEGRATION OF INNER FORCES

Scholars, both in the East and the West, have neglected to take into account the complete development of our psychic being as laid down in the Upaniṣads and its importance in the setting of life. The Upaniṣads give a definite moulding and formation to our being in order that the finest psychic unfolding may be possible, and therefore they present a systematic attempt at penetrating into the mysteries of the different layers of our being —physical, vital, mental, psychic, and spiritual.[2] When the complete structure of our personality with all its forces stands exposed, then the possibility arises of appraising the values of these different forces.

Spiritual seeking does not always arise from the same inspiration, for there are infinite demands in our being which call for satisfaction; and unless the nature of the forces be completely revealed to our knowledge, we cannot always overcome their influence and prepare ourselves for the final goal. For the true aspirant, there is necessity of bringing all the inner forces under control and regulating them in such a way that a mental and psychic harmony of being is established before thinking of the highest spiritual realization.

The Upaniṣads give us clear ideas of all the forces, and sometimes it appears that they have anticipated some of the conclusions of modern energism and vitalism in their doctrine of *prāṇa* and some forms of idealism in their doctrine of *vijñāna*. But the Upaniṣads, while recognizing their value as psychic and cosmic principles, have not characterized them as ultimate truths. They throw much light on the development of vital and higher mental intuition, but their great services lie in going beyond them and in emphasizing supra-mental intuitions. In short, the supreme interest of the Upaniṣads is fixed in the central truth of Being, and all their efforts converge in understanding it.

There is a prevailing misconception that the Upaniṣads do not lay

[1] *Bṛ. U.*, II.3.1.
[2] *Tai. U.*, III.2-6.

stress on the dynamic aspects of life. Whatever may be the final objective in spiritual life, the Upaniṣads show due regard to the dynamic spiritual life. But even in this form of spiritual approach, there is insistence upon identification between the seeking self and the object of worship. This sense of identification is a great secret in the life of spiritual aspiration and unfoldment. It seeks not only to commune with a particular cosmic force, but it has also the objective of awaking the *cosmic nature* sleeping in man, and of unveiling his *divine nature*.

The sub-mental forces cannot be ignored in spiritual life, for in the integral life which spirituality seeks to achieve the demand is to estimate the value of all the forces and their economy in life and to remove the conflict from our divided existence.

LINK BETWEEN PSYCHIC AND COSMIC FORCES

The Upaniṣadic seers thought that the sub-mental vital forces should be divinized before the higher ascents in spiritual life could be undertaken. To this end they prescribe a course of discipline called *prāṇa-upāsanā*.[3] Similarly, next, the other psychic forces are to be divinized through the disciplines called *mana-upāsanā, vijñāna-upāsanā*, etc.[4] But in everyone of them the secret is to go deep within and find the link between the psychic forces and the cosmic forces; there is a close unity between them. And this is taught in the theory of correspondence. This correspondence is not merely a parallelism, it is something more. Parallelism indicates separation and distinction in a common background. But the correspondence theory in the Upaniṣads implies the unity more than the distinction. There has been no separation between the inner and the outer. It is more seeming than real. This correspondence allows the realization of the identity of forces working in nature and man; and of drawing greater power, strength, vision, and wisdom through the finer infusion of the forces into us. This allows us the possibility of waking up the potentialities in us by removing inertia and stiffness from our nature and thus making it more plastic.

The immediate effect of such an adaptation is that it removes the usual distinction of the higher and the lower from our nature, for each force is felt to have a cosmic function and character. And the regulation of the forces becomes natural with the removal of obscurities; the lower ones then do not set up opposition to the higher; they become the channel of their expression, for they realize that they are vehicles of manifestation of the supra-mental forces in earth-consciousness. They move now in new grooves and with refined impulses.

[3] *Pra. U.*, II.
[4] *Tai. U.*, III.1-6.

But this correspondence does not mean that the restraint is removed from our inner life which is exposed to the play of chaotic instinctive forces. Every form of psychic opening has that possibility, for unless there is opening of our whole being, it cannot be completely organized. But, happily, the whole of our vital or instinctive life is not completely chaotic. There is law and order, for it is never cut off from the cosmic psychism. Nature is not completely blind; there is the immanent consciousness in it.

PSYCHIC OPENING AND WIDENING OF BEING

But the organization of our being is the least thing. It is the preliminary requisite for the finer opening. The internal equilibrium is the basis and the ground for the higher illumination, and it is indeed a necessity for the final realization of the correspondence of forces. It is this psychic understanding which alone can give us a wide range of comprehension, fine elasticity of movement, and vastness of being. This psychic opening is a necessity, for it not only carries conviction, but allows freedom from the limitation of our nature. The correspondence of the *adhyātma,* the *adhibhūta,* and the *adhidaiva*[5] does not present only a unity which has some philosophic importance to the spiritual aspirant. It presents the unity of psychic and cosmic nature which helps our adaptation and enlarges our vision and being.

This is the reason why the Upaniṣads have laid so much stress upon *upāsanā* (meditation), for *upāsanā* gives the right attitude which can put us in touch with the radiant forces that vibrate everywhere. *Upāsanā* not only elevates our feelings, it also widens our being. The Upaniṣads, by insisting upon the fundamental change of our being, give us the sure foundation of mysticism. They emphasize in *upāsanā* more a knowledge-attitude than a feeling-attitude. The feeling-attitude curbs wide comprehension and fundamental change of our being. The ripples of the heart, no doubt, give delightful ecstasies, but they prevent that silence of being which can make the deeper penetration successful.

This knowledge-attitude enables us to assess the forces rightly and to pass successfully through the different layers of being, showing their true nature and exact function, their psychic and cosmic character. And it is a great requirement, for right knowledge can make us free from all clinging to the forces and their play in life and make the supernal ascent easy and delightful.

This widening of being becomes possible when the object we meditate upon is received under the aspect of eternity. For really that only can

[5] Pertaining to the body, the elements, and the gods, respectively.

establish largeness of vision and gradually lead on to the finer imagination which can feel the immanent intensity and vastness of existence. The Upaniṣads advance symbols which indicate aspects of eternity and possess the dynamic potency of ultimately leading to mystic opening and realization.[a]

These symbols are centres of psychic forces and have their value in making us responsive to psychic vibration. The importance of symbols has not been recognized only because psychic opening has been almost forgotten. The ascent of the soul through the mystic opening across the intermediate planes of existence is the invariable consequence of *upāsanā* which makes us acquainted with finer values of existence. The psychic intuition deepens the feeling which gradually passes into highest wisdom and establishes in us a harmony which reveals the rhythms of cosmic life. It is indeed an exalted experience of the symmetry, the beauty, and the dignity of life, and the Upaniṣads emphasize the deepening of consciousness in order that the immanent beauties and immensities may not be lost upon us. This world of immensity extends to the subtle and causal existence. Hence the Upaniṣads have drawn a distinction between the realizations of the Nature-deities, of Hiraṇyagarbha, and of Īśvara. This is the ordered succession of spiritual realization of immanent powers and immanent unity; but these experiences and insights, however radiant and mystical, exhibit only the subtle dynamism of life running through the various grades of existence. Some of the symbols, especially *Om*, reveal the graded existences by making us responsive to the cosmic vibrations.

TRANSCENDENCE OF TIME, SPACE, AND PERSONALITY

But the flowering in spiritual life does not stop here, for these realizations are spiritual events in time. They indicate the widening of consciousness, which is a delightful experience; but the consciousness is not freed from the time-sense. Spiritual life gives indications as to how to transcend time, for it is essentially a movement in consciousness. It is a unique experience, for life and time are eternally associated, and hence it becomes difficult to understand experience which oversteps time. The Upaniṣads emphasize the kind of spiritual experience that transcends time as the most pregnant of all, for it offers an experience which, by its uniqueness, is totally different from the psychic experiences, either of life, love, or beauty. But life is rooted in Truth, and unless the widening of consciousness is such as can embrace the total Reality, the mystical opening is not complete. In the Upaniṣads, the seeking has been essentially directed towards the grasping of the transcendent Reality, beyond all relative verities and values. It is a supra-conceptual realization and oversteps the mental

[a] *Chā U*, VII.

and the vital truths and even the highest demand for an intellectual and spiritual unity.

Here the demand is to forgo not only all relative verities and creative ideals, but also immanent spiritual values and truths, for these have hold in personal consciousness and not in the Absolute. Absolute consciousness implies the freedom of consciousness from the polarity of knowledge and all psychic mutations. It presupposes the merging of the personal consciousness in the absolute background, with the meaning and importance of personality for ever lost. More properly, it is the awakening in transcendent consciousness, when the finite, together with the infinite, vanishes away. Personality vanishes, so also personal experience. It is a supra-personal, supra-conceptual, and supra-temporal experience.

Tattvamasi (Thou art That) does not suggest a synthesis of the finite and the infinite, which is a personal experience and can at best put forth a fellowship with the Saguṇa (conditioned) Brahman. This is no doubt the flowering of spiritual consciousness, carrying with it exalted experience, true knowledge, chastened feeling, and a synthetic vision of Reality; but such an experience is not the realization of the transcendent Truth. To reach the transcendent summit of Being, an approach different from realizing cosmic consciousness is necessary. The experience of cosmic consciousness is supra-logical or alogical, but this experience is only a freedom from the circumscribed finite sense and a passing into the vastness of the Infinite, transcending the limits of space and time, but not necessarily the Absolute. It is the realization of the One, including and embracing the many, in which the touch of the One can be felt and realized at the ultimate fringe of existence. But the transcendent realization is not like that. It is not the experience of an enlarging consciousness. It is not the experience of consciousness in the ecstasy of love or beauty. It is consciousness dissociated from all psychic feeling, psychic expansion, and psychic seeing and intuition. It is to reach the pivot or the frontal point of consciousness.

Naturally, it is to be distinguished from ordinary religious consciousness and even from mystical exaltation. It is not akin to our normal spiritual experience. Such an experience inspires our whole being and transforms our whole nature, adding grace to holiness, divine charm to beauty, divine experience to knowledge. Such an experience implies the fine movement of the psychic dynamism under the divine inspiration and force. But these expressions of the spirit, however lofty and soaring, lack in the spiritual value of the transcendence which gives us the taste of freedom from the hold of personal consciousness and experience.

The Upaniṣads lay great emphasis upon such experience, because it frees the soul from all such dynamic concreteness and restriction of a

centralization. The idea of *saṁsāra* or the cycle of existence originates from the sense of a false individuality, and even in the dynamic aspiration of the soul no complete freedom from *saṁsāra* is possible. Again, freedom from *saṁsāra* is not so much a point with the Upaniṣads as the fuller and the completer life. And it is for this that there is a place for the dynamic Divine in the Upaniṣads, the God of attributes, which allows an experience of the vastness of being, richness of life, and wide amplitudes of harmony, and reveals the secrets of an ideal unity behind the apparent divided concreteness of life. The realization of such a unity has a metaphysical and a spiritual importance. Metaphysically, it unites the causal and the effectual world, the world of potentiality and actuality; spiritually, it reveals the immanent dignities of life and blessedness. And if these are not much emphasized, it is only because the finest objective is so unique a promise and so elevating a state that the sublimities of the immanent life are completely shadowed and eclipsed.

The metaphysical and the spiritual realization of God in nature and God in soul has its importance, for it removes the idea of a separate existence from thought and reveals the wide commonalty of spirit.

But the Upaniṣads could not confine our intellectual and spiritual aspiration to this stage. Intellectually, the insight into the same principle immanent in all things and existence prepares the ground for the highest intellectual intuition of the absolute Existence. The transition is very easy and the demand for this transition is very logical. It is easy, because the fundamental sameness of being in all existence pleads its integral identity, and the intellectual apprehension is raised from synthetic unity to transcendental sameness; logical, because the human mind in its search after Reality cannot be satisfied with any indefinite conception, and nothing could be more definite than the idea of the Absolute which synthesizes all experiences and yet, at the same time, transcends them.

The relation of time to Reality is an interesting theme. The Upaniṣads make the spatio-temporal setting located in the Absolute, but the Absolute transcends space and time. So long as human knowledge is confined to the spatio-temporal setting, it cannot transcend the world of relative verities; the final objective in our metaphysical and spiritual adventure is reached when we can transcend our experience in space and time. The final knowledge is attained when the synthetic view has been transcended and the higher reaches of intuition beyond space and time have been attained.

RESULTS OF TRANSCENDENCE

This intuition gives a new knowledge which it is not possible for reason to give: Here the previous experience and insight are changed totally, and

we are made free from the self-centric reference of knowledge and experience. The Self now becomes dislocated from its limited centre, encompasses the whole existence, and finally transcends it. In other words, its existence apart from the reference to space-time becomes a clear realization. And our knowledge is released from the movements of experience and life.

This experience has its effect upon life: It makes it free from its normal restrictions. It makes life supra-ethical. The ethical dualities and contraries are possible of the divided life, but not of the integral existence. Where the knowledge of such an existence has been direct, it leaves its effect upon life. It frees it from limitations natural to unenlightened existence, and makes its movements and adaptations cosmic. Ethical discipline is necessary for illumination, but the illumined soul is beyond the contraries of normal life and experience. It is elevated to a point of existence which remains untouched by them. Cosmic energies and powers are released by the cosmic vision. Intelligence becomes unlimited, and will cosmically efficient. The one sees cosmically; the other works cosmically. The liberated soul therefore becomes the centre of knowledge and power, and is fixed in its unfettered Being. It can exercise its power through the forces of environment for any cosmic purpose. And when the time is ripe for the final plunge into the depth of Being, after the exhaustion of its previously commenced *karma*, it gets into complete silence, which is its being and essence. And the veil drops for ever.

The release of a particular soul does not mean the release of all. But the release of any one soul has collective as well as individual effect. Psychically, the difference between the individual and the race is not so sharp, and the release of an individual affects the life of the race. It inspires the race to attain the goal. And thus it helps the evolution and the redemption of collective humanity. Philosophically, the question is a thorny one, dependent as it is upon that of the relation between the individual and the collective Self; but spiritually, the liberation of a unit has importance inasmuch as it infuses humanity with new life and aspiration, and fills it with new psychic energies that are released when the soul passes into illumination. It affects the whole existence, for it brings in the joy of victory, and the message of victory makes repercussions through the whole gamut of life.

KNOWLEDGE AND POWER

It has been pointed out by the western scholars that the Upaniṣadic ideal of a wise man is more of an autocrat, more of a man of power than anything; the ideal is the ideal of power. This is a mistake. No doubt, we read in the texts that to the wise man Nature unlocks her secrets, and

at will he can penetrate into the different realms of existence. The ideal of *jīvanmukti* (liberation in life) cannot be reached unless man has access to transcendence through the finest psychological opening. The liberated soul develops in time a transparent psychic being which lays bare all the aspects of existence, and he has the first-hand knowledge of all the forces. Hence deeper knowledge gives greater power ; but power is not the end sought. It comes naturally with knowledge. The wise man is indifferent to the values of relative verities—intellectual, moral, or religious. They are side-shows which must impress themselves upon him as he goes into the deeper recesses of his being. And since he is released from all limitations of being and nature, he is expected to be powerful. The difficulty of understanding this position arises from our inability to appraise correctly the height of liberated existence and from the natural habit of clinging to our usual humanistic ways of living and thinking. The too much humanistic appeal of religion makes us shrink from power ; but really power is as much divine as knowledge, the one difference being that it is utilized rarely in cosmic transfiguration. Religious attitude has wrongly been identified with mere love or sympathy. It should cover the wider and the deeper urges of life, wisdom and power. It is the central and comprehensive movement of our being.

In many Upaniṣads (especially the latter-day texts) mention is made of yogic discipline and purities. They are necessary to make our being responsive to the higher currents of the soul, and to discover the finer movements which reveal to us the supra-conscious movement of life. *Yoga* is the art of opening the unconscious parts of our being, which will enable us to feel the direct touch of cosmic consciousness, nay, sometimes inspire ourselves with the touch. The Upaniṣads take note of this approach ; but it does not go against its final objective, provided that the spirit of true search and quest is not lost in the seeking of powers which *yoga* reveals. *Yoga* makes our dynamic nature finer and more rhythmical, and naturally a vaster comprehension and a wider power are the result. But the goal cannot be reached unless there is a greater concentration on consciousness. This can alone help us to reach its transcendent silence, neglecting the transcendent power. Generally, in the Upaniṣads, *yoga* is treated as a preliminary discipline for concentration and clarification of mental being. But it soon reveals finer psychic movements towards the enriching of life, and unless the seeking soul can distinguish between the values of conscience and power, he may be carried away by the latter. But a constant watchfulness and a stern regard for the absolute Truth can keep the seeker safe and save him from the domination of powers. Knowledge provides the surest anchor to save us from the labyrinth of powers.

21

UPANIṢADIC MEDITATION

UPĀSANĀ, which is here roughly translated as Upaniṣadic meditation, aimed in part at engendering higher mental attitudes with regard to the daily avocations, social contacts, and religious preoccupations.[1] This path of inner transformation, in the midst of outward conformity, was worked out in all its philosophical bearings and practical details by men of action among whom were some Upaniṣadic king-saints (*rājarṣis*), who were conscious of the efficacy of the path as well as of their monopoly of this. In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (VI.2.8), King Pravāhaṇa Jaivali says to the Brāhmaṇa Gautama, 'Before this, this knowledge did not reside in any Brāhmaṇa'. In the *Chāndogya* (V.3.7), too, the same king says to Gautama, 'Before you, this knowledge reached no Brāhmaṇa, and hence in all the worlds the Kṣatriyas had their supremacy'.[2]

MEDITATION IN EVERYDAY LIFE

To our forebears no philosophy had any claim to recognition unless it had some bearing on life. To illustrate the point, let us cite some concrete examples from the Upaniṣadic texts.

The chanting of the Vedas was the daily duty of the students of those days. But lest it should degenerate into a mechanical process, the students were encouraged to add a little reflection in the form of *upāsanā* to this routine work. The *Chāndogya* (I.3.8-9) says, 'One should reflect on the *sāman* with which one would eulogize, on the *ṛc* on which the *sāman* rests, on the seer who saw the *ṛc* verse, and one should reflect on the deity which one would eulogize'. In the *Taittirīya* (I.3.1-4), we read of the *saṁhitā-upaniṣad*, or the meditation based on the conjunction of letters, where the idea is to lead the pupil's mind from the mere composition of words to the universal fact of four factors involved in all conjunctions, viz. the two component parts of a pair, their actual association, and the resulting whole.

Take another, and a more sublime, meditation, the well-known *pañcāgni-vidyā* (the meditation on the five fires).[3] The whole world, sentient and insentient, is here thought of as a group of factors in a cosmic sacrifice involving five successive fires arranged in the order of their subtleness; and they are all knit together through a spirit of self-sacrifice, so that a new

[1] *Chā. U.*, I.1.10; *Bṛ. U.*, I.4.7.
[2] Cf. *Chā. U.*, V.11; I.8.
[3] *Bṛ. U.*, VI.2; *Chā. U.*, V.4-10.

creation may emerge, new life may come into existence, at every stage. Thus faith is poured as an oblation in heaven, which is the highest of the fires; and, as a consequence, the lunar world—the world of manes—comes into existence. The moon is then poured as an oblation in the second fire, viz. the rain-god; and so rain pours on earth, which is the third fire. From this sacrifice grows food, which is offered to man, who is considered as the fourth fire, from whom comes the seed. The fifth fire is the wife. The most familiar emergence of life is witnessed at child-birth. The ancients were bold enough to look on all things and processes from a higher intellectual and spiritual plane. To their spiritual vision, the father, the mother, and the gods who preside over the organs were all agents in a sacrifice bringing new life into existence. As the cosmic counterpart of this outlook on conjugal relationship, we are asked to think of the other world, i.e. heaven, as fire, the sun as its fuel, the rays as the smoke of that fire, day as the light of the fire, the directions as charcoal; or of the cloud-god as fire, the year as its fuel, the clouds as smoke, lightning as light, thunder as charcoal; and so on and so forth.

One of the grandest conceptions of life as a sacrifice is to be found in the *Chāndogya* (III.16-17), which, by the way, is the richest storehouse of Upaniṣadic meditation. This Upaniṣad says, 'Man himself is a sacrifice', and shows in detail how this can be so. Man's life, divided into three stages, is compared to the three periods in a sacrifice called *savanas*. Each period is given its proper deities. The first stage is presided over by the Vasus, who work for life's stability, for life requires the utmost attention during this period. They are succeeded in youth by the Rudras, the energetic gods, who are often cruel. Consequently, a man must be extremely judicious in what he does in his youth. Old age is presided over by the Ādityas, who attract everything towards them. Men, then attracted by higher forces, prepare for the final departure after making their best contribution to the world. In this connection, we are also asked to look on distress caused by hunger and thirst as *dīkṣā* (initiation) into a higher life of struggle and achievement; on charity, non-killing, truth, etc. as *dakṣiṇā* (offerings to the performers of our sacrifice, i.e. to our good neighbours); on merriment and laughter as hymns and songs to gods; and on death as the bath after the sacrifice is completed.

There are many other practical hints for transforming life into a spiritual discipline. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* (V.11) instructs us to look on death and disease as *tapasyā* (penance): 'This indeed is excellent austerity that a man suffers when he is ill. . . . This indeed is excellent austerity that a man after death is carried to the forest. . . . This indeed is excellent *tapasyā* that a man after death is placed on the fire.'

These meditations are often directed towards Reality or God. The *Chāndogya* gives a practical hint as to how one can be in the constant presence of Reality in the midst of daily duties: 'The Ātman is in the heart, . . . he who meditates thus goes to heaven every day' (VIII.3.3). Surely, it does not cost one much to bear constantly in mind that the heart is the temple of God from which He is directing and watching all our activities. The same idea is involved in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* (III.7) conception of *antaryāmin* (the inner Ruler).

THE MEANING OF UPĀSANĀ

Thus far we have dealt with some Upaniṣadic meditations which are linked up with life and in which Vedānta is reduced to practice. But '*upāsanā*' is a much more comprehensive term and covers not only a life of action, but actionless life as well. Let us, then, first understand what the word '*upāsanā*' exactly means. Literally, it means sitting near, mentally approaching an ideal. *Upāsanā* is sometimes referred to by such words as '*upaniṣad*', '*darśana*', '*veda*', etc., which terms lay emphasis on the several aspects of Upaniṣadic meditation. It is firstly a secret thing, to be diligently protected as one's own, and not to be merely talked or argued about or exposed to the derision of the common people. Besides, it is a mental attitude with regard to things which are not to be looked upon as detached entities, but are to be linked up with their higher aspects in a cosmic whole. And that attitude again has to change into an experience, the whole personality getting transformed and elevated thereby. It is both an objective outlook and a subjective realization.

In Vedāntic literature, we come across several definitions of this term. In the *Vedāntasāra* the definition runs thus: '*Upāsanā* is a kind of mental process relating to the qualified Brahman (Saguṇa Brahman), such as, for instance, the *Śāṇḍilya-vidyā*.'[4] But this definition is not comprehensive enough. For, in the Upaniṣads, we have not only *Brahma-upāsanā*, but also *abrahma-upāsanā*, i.e. it has as its object not only the qualified Brahman, but much more that is not Brahman. Śaṅkara, accordingly, defines *upāsanā* thus in his commentary on the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* (I.3.9): '*Upāsanā* is mentally approaching the form of the deity or the like, as it is presented by the eulogistic portions of the Vedas relating to the objects of meditation, and concentrating on it, excluding conventional notions, till one is as completely identified with it, as with one's body, conventionally regarded as one's self.'[5]

So, according to Śaṅkara, the object of meditation may be any object or any deity or Brahman. Besides, it is essentially a mental process, and

[4] *Vedāntasāra*, 12.
[5] Cf. His introduction to the *Chāndogya*.

aims at a knowledge of the object through identification. But *upāsanā* itself is not knowledge. It may be helpful to realization, through the purification of the mind, but by itself it falls far short of realization. The processes of knowing and meditation are both mental acts, to be sure, but knowledge of an object is not subject to the option of the knower. The *Pañcadaśī* (IX.74-82) brings out this distinction very aptly: 'Knowledge is determined by the object, but *upāsanā* is dependent on the subject.' The *Pañcadaśī* also emphasizes the element of faith in *upāsanā*. One must have faith in the object and the process of meditation as taught by the scriptures and the teacher. Knowledge does not presuppose any such faith. A third point to note is that the objects of *upāsanā* are not mere imaginary things or concepts, nor need they be real in the ordinary sense of the term; but they are presented by the scriptures. Fourthly, *upāsanā* is a process of building up from the bottom upward, expanding the ego at every step, whereas knowledge achieves its object rather in a negative way by removing ignorance. Thus knowledge and meditation are entirely different.

Our next difficulty is with regard to *nididhyāsana,* which term also is roughly translated as meditation. Some Vedāntists, too, would think of *nididhyāsana* as meditation in the ordinary sense of the term. But Sureśvara in his *Vārttika* is at pains to show that this can never be so. In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* (II.4.5), Yājñavalkya says to Maitreyī, his wife: 'The Self is to be seen, to be heard of, to be thought of, and to be made an object of *nididhyāsana.* Everything is known when the Self is seen through hearing, thinking, and realization (*vijñāna*).' Commenting on this, Sureśvara says that the use of the word *vijñāna* in the second sentence, in place of *nididhyāsana* in the first, shows that *nididhyāsana* is not ordinary meditation, but a meditation of a higher order in which there is no sense of exertion of will, no conscious employment of the thinking process, and no intellection whatsoever. It is the constant presence of a conviction of the form 'I am Brahman', and yet falls just short of *aparokṣānubhūti* or the direct realization of the Self.

CLASSES OF UPASANA

A brief survey of the different classes of *upāsanā* will clarify our ideas about this word. We have already spoken of *Brahma-upāsanā* and *abrahma-upāsanā.* Of *Brahma-upāsanā,* however, there has been mention of only one aspect, viz. meditation on personal God, immanent or qualified Brahman. But there is a school of Vedāntists who think that it is possible to meditate on the transcendental or absolute Brahman as well. Most Vedāntists would not agree with this, since the absolute Brahman cannot be the content of any thought or meditation. When properly analysed, it would seem that

the controversy hinges on the meaning we give to the word *nididhyāsana*. If by this word we mean ordinary meditation, then surely there can be no *upāsanā* of the absolute Brahman; for, howsoever we may try, we can have no image, concept, or psychosis in our minds higher than that of the qualified Brahman. If, on the other hand, *nididhyāsana* means meditation of the higher order, as defined by Sureśvara, we may have meditation on the absolute Brahman. But for clarity of thought and expression, we shall be well advised not to call it *upāsanā* but *nididhyāsana*, not a form of mental activity, but a flow of conviction. This 'higher meditation' is essentially nothing more than an intensification of the vision of the Truth received initially from the scriptures and the teacher through *śravaṇa* (hearing). The first introduction to Truth and the last consummation do not differ in their contents, but only in their intensity of realization.

From another standpoint the *upāsanās* may be placed under three heads: First, those which are connected with sacrifices etc. actually being performed, *aṅgāvabaddha*, and are calculated to heighten the results of the sacrifices; for, according to the Vedic people, though the sacrifices are efficacious by themselves, when they are conjoined with meditation they lead to greater results.[6] Secondly, there are those meditations which are neither connected with actual sacrifices nor with Brahman, but are calculated to lead to heaven or yield other cherished results. In 'Look on the *ṛc* as the earth and the *sāman* as fire',[7] we have an example of the first class. But in looking on death and suffering etc. as penances,[8] described earlier, we have an example of the second class. Thirdly, there are the *Brahma-upāsanās*.

From still another point of view, there are two kinds of *upāsanās*—*Brahma-upāsanā* (direct meditation on Brahman) and *pratīka-upāsanā* (indirect meditation based on symbols). A *pratīka* is a symbol such as a *śālagrāma* (the aniconic stone symbol of Viṣṇu), an image, a name, etc. The ideas of the deities to be meditated on are fastened on these symbols.

The emblematical meditations are of two different kinds—*sampad-upāsanā* and *adhyāsa-upāsanā*. When we take up a symbol of a lower order and by virtue of similarity superimpose on it the qualities etc. of a higher thing, we have *sampad-upāsanā* or meditation based on similarity, through which we reflect not on the lower order of things, but on the higher ones, which the lower things symbolize.[9] In fact, the lower things are here raised through similarity to their higher correlates, where they find their fulfilment. Thus in the *Bhāmatī*[10] we read: 'The Viśvedevas

[6] *Chā. U.*, I.1.10. [7] *Ibid.*, I.6.1. [8] *Bṛ. U.*, V.11.1.
[9] Cf. *Kalpataru* on *B.S.*, I.1.4; *Bṛ. U.*, III.1.6-10.
[10] On *B.S.*, I.1.4.

(All-gods), who are innumerable, have a similarity with the infinite mental modifications. Therefore the Viśvedevas are superimposed on the mind; the mind itself is considered as though non-existing, and the Viśvedevas alone are meditated on. As a result of such a meditation one attains the infinite worlds.[11] . . . But in *adhyāsa-upāsanā* the symbol itself predominates and on it are superimposed the qualities etc. of the deity, as for instance, "Meditate on the mind as Brahman",[12] or "The sun is Brahman, this is the instruction".'[13] But the old philosophers were careful to warn us that there can be no direct meditation on God so long as the mind hovers in the plane of symbols.[14] It is only when we can transcend the grosser world that we are vouchsafed a higher realization of the Deity.

In referring to *sampad-upāsanā,* or meditation based on resemblance, Śaṅkara writes:[15] 'By this is meant a meditation, by virtue of some point of resemblance, on rites with inferior results, like *agnihotra,* as rites with superior results; or it is a meditation on some part of the lesser rite as these very results. Even when people try with all their ardour to undertake measures to bring about certain ends, they may fail of their object through some defect. So a man, who regularly tends the sacrificial fire, takes up any rite, such as *agnihotra,* that suits him, and if he happens to know the results of particular rites, meditates that the rite before him will produce the results he seeks. Otherwise, it would be impossible for people of even the upper three castes, who are qualified for them, to perform the *rājasūya, aśvamedha, naramedha,* and *sarvamedha* sacrifices. . . . They can attain those results only by means of the meditation based on resemblance.' This meditation may be of two kinds, in accordance as we aim at the superior rite as a whole or at its results. With regard to the first, Śaṅkara has referred to *agnihotra.* As for the second kind, in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* (III. 1. 8) we read that since there are three kinds of oblations, viz. those that blaze up, those that make noise, and those that sink into the earth, therefore through them one attains the bright heaven, the uproarious world of the manes, and the lowly human world, respectively.

UPĀSANĀ AND DEVOTION

As already indicated, *upāsanā* has in it many elements of devotion. It is not mere thought; there is scope for emotion and volition as well. Ideas are to be adhered to with determination, and will is to be sustained by faith. And the whole effort is to be sweetened by love—love for a personal God sometimes, but more often love for a higher ideal which is nothing but Saccidānanda (Existence-Knowledge-Bliss). In consonance

[11] Cf. *Chā. U.*, VII.3.
[12] *Ibid.*, III.18.
[13] *Ibid.*, III.19.
[14] *B.S.*, IV.1.4.
[15] Commentary on *Bṛ. U.*, III.1.6.

with the devotional schools, the Upaniṣads illustrate the state of realization through the imagery of a couple lost to everything in an all-absorbing embrace.[16] And of God it is said, 'He is indeed the essence (love), and getting that essence all become happy';[17] 'Brahman is Bliss';[18] and 'All these beings come from Bliss, after birth they live through Bliss, and they move towards and enter into Bliss'.[19] An example of meditation on personality can be cited from the *Chāndogya* (I.6.6-8) where the mind is directed towards the divine Presence in the sun. His beard is golden, His hair is golden, up to the tips of His nails everything is golden. His eyes are red as lotuses. This golden Being resides in the sun, and He is above all impurities.[20] The *Muṇḍaka* (II.1.4) speaks of the cosmic Person as having fire as His head, the sun and moon as His eyes, the Vedas as His voice, the earth as His legs, and so on. There is also mention of *tanmayatva*, i.e. becoming united through and through with God, in the same Upaniṣad (II.2.3-4); it teaches a beautiful *upāsanā* based on *Om*, where, too, is revealed the real mechanism for the concentration of the mind on God: 'Taking as a bow the great weapon presented in the Upaniṣads, fix on it an arrow that has been sharpened by meditation. Then, stretching the bow fully, with a mind wholly absorbed in Its thought (i.e. of Brahman), do thou hit the target which is the imperishable Reality. The *Om* is the bow, the mind is the arrow, Brahman is the target. It is to be hit with concentration, and one should become unified with the target just like the arrow.'

As may be naturally inferred, this kind of devotional *upāsanā* was often combined with prayer to God, both in His personal and impersonal aspects. To illustrate this, we quote the following passages: 'O Śiva, do Thou make innocuous the arrow that Thou hast taken in hand for shooting.'[21] 'From evil lead me to good; from darkness lead me to light; from death lead me to immortality.'[22]

In the *bhakti* school of thought, there are often meditations on God based on the meaning of the letters of His name. The Upaniṣads also abound in such meditations. Among the so-called later Upaniṣads, in which the *bhakti* element is strikingly in evidence, the *Gopāla-pūrvatāpanīya Upaniṣad* (1) says: '*Kṛṣi* implies the earth, and *na* implies bliss. Their combination means Kṛṣṇa who is supreme Brahman.' Similarly, the older Upaniṣads prescribe *upāsanās* based on the meaning of letters and suggestiveness of sound. The *Chāndogya* (VIII.3.3) says that *hṛdaya* (heart) is a name of God, for its derivative meaning is *hṛdi-ayam*—He is in the heart.

[16] *Bṛ. U.*, IV.3.21.
[17] *Tai. U.*, II.7.
[18] *Chā. U.*, IV.10.4.
[19] *Tai. U.*, III.6.
[20] Cf. *Bṛ. U.*, V.5.2-4.
[21] *Śve. U.*, III.6.
[22] *Bṛ. U.*, I.3.28.

Then, again, there is the idea of dependence on God. For instance, the *Nārāyaṇa* says, 'I take refuge in the deity Durgā', and the *Śvetāśvatara*, which is counted among the older Upaniṣads, takes 'refuge in Brahman for the sake of salvation' (VI.18). The latter Upaniṣad also uses the word *bhakti* in its usual sense (VI.23). Instructions for *japa* (repetition) of a name of God or a *mantra* occur very often.[23] Besides, there are references to grace: 'By him is He realized to whom He is full of grace',[24] and 'through the grace of God', 'through the grace of the Deity'.[25] The presence of these elements in the Vedas demolishes the theory of the Paurāṇic origin of *bhakti*.

AIMS AND METHODS

We have thus distinguished *upāsanā* from *karma* and *bhakti* on the one hand and *jñāna* and *nididhyāsana* on the other. We have seen that its proper function is to prepare the mind for the final realization, intuition, or revelation of the ultimate Reality. *Upāsanā* takes hold of the man as a whole. It deepens his emotion, strengthens his will, and expands his intellect. But the maximum that can be gained through such expanding *upāsanā* is identification with Hiraṇyagarbha or cosmic Intelligence-Will-Power thought of as a Person. Higher still is the state where all thoughts and words cease and only Existence-Knowledge-Bliss reigns in its solitary glory. The highest realization comes as a sudden and spontaneous opening of insight. All that *upāsanā* can do is to free the mind from all impurities and worldly distractions, and concentrate it on Brahman, so that light may descend unimpeded.

Pravāhaṇa Jaivali, of whom we have already spoken, teaches some Brāhmaṇas in the *Chāndogya* (I.8-9) an *upāsanā* in which the imagination is guided to higher and higher strata till it loses itself in the highest thing which is Brahman. Thus the singing of *sāmans* is shown to be dependent on vitality, which again is sustained by food produced with the help of water. Water comes from the upper atmosphere. This rests on solid earth. This earth is dependent on the subtlest of all things which is Brahman. Thus if we push our chain of dependence to the farthest limit, we cannot escape being in the presence of the highest Cause. This is a meditation based on the ascending order of things.

In another *upāsanā* in the same Upaniṣad, this ascent is combined with gradual expansion. Only the bare outlines can be presented here. First, we are asked to meditate on such words as *hāu*, *hāi*, *atha*, etc., which meaningless words are added in *sāman* songs to make a tune complete. We

[23] Cf. *Bṛ. U.*, VI.3,6 ; I.3.28. [24] *Ka. U.* 2.23 [25] *Śve. U.*, III.20 ; VI.21.

have to consider *hāu* as the earth, *hāi* as air, *atha* as moon, and so on. Then we come to the *sāman* song as a whole divided into five parts, which are thought of differently as identical with different things in the universe, till, at the end of this section of the *upāsanā*, we have almost exhausted everything gross and subtle, including the mind, the vital force, the organ of speech, etc. The next stage leads us to a higher synthesis where a bigger *sāman*, having seven parts, is taken up as a symbol for all conceivable things. In the fourth stage, different kinds of *sāmans*, bearing different names, are used as symbols. The climax is reached in the last stage, when, by the widest sweep, the whole universe is superimposed on all the *sāmans* conceived as a unified entity, and the Upaniṣad concludes the *upāsanā* by declaring, 'He who meditates thus becomes identified with all'.[26]

But if the Upaniṣads taught the *upāsanās* of infinite expansion, they were careful to prescribe meditations for probing into the subtlest of all subtle things. Thus we are told that the earth is the essence of all elements, since it is their highest creation. Water is the essence of earth, since it is water that makes the particles of earth a compact whole. Herbs, that is to say, the juices of the herbs, are the essence of water, since they maintain life. Man is the essence of these juices which impart strength. Speech is the essence of man, since speech distinguishes him from animals. *Ṛcas* (hymns) are the essence of speech. The *sāmans* are the essence of the *ṛcas*, since music is the highest achievement of voice. And *Om* is the essence of all *sāmans*.[27] This *Om*, we must remember, is the name and symbol of Brahman—'*Om iti Brahma*'.[28] Thus through this process of searching for the essences of things, we reach Brahman. Again, we are to deduce everything from that *Om*, for everything is from *Om*, and everything is penetrated through and through by *Om* ; *Om* is everything.[29] This double process of induction and deduction carries us to the centre of things and gives us a universal view.

The Upaniṣads were, however, careful not to carry all and sundry to the highest meditation, irrespective of their mental progress. Various *upāsanās* of different degrees and subtlety were prescribed for people in various stages of life. 'From the familiar to the unfamiliar' was their motto, as it was also 'from the concrete to the abstract'. It is a mistake to think that the sections of the Vedas dealing with *upāsanā* were meant for those who had retired from life, the *vānaprasthas*. The students (*brahmacārins*), too, had their *upāsanās*, as we have already shown in connection with *saṁhitā-upaniṣad*. The householders (*gṛhasthas*) had theirs, as for instance the *pañcāgni-vidyā*. The sacrificer, the priests engaged by him in the

[26] *Chā. U.*, I.13 to II.21.
[27] *Ibid.*, I.1.2.
[28] *Tai. U.*, I.8 ; cf. *Ka. U.*, I.2.16.
[29] *Chā. U.*, II.23.3 ; *Mā. U.*, 1.

sacrifice, the chanters of hymns, the pourers of oblations, and the singers of *sāmans*—all had their adequate *upāsanās*. And so also had those who led a retired life, or were otherwise debarred from undertaking the costly and prolonged ceremonies.

As a usual rule, they started from the most familiar things—the students from letters, the ordinary people from acts, the thinkers from concepts, and the meditators from lower meditations. The whole process aimed at a grand synthesis in which the gross and the subtle, and the microcosm and the macrocosm, lost their separate existence. Thus, at every turn, we are reminded of the identity of the *adhibhūta*, the *adhidaiva*, and the *adhyātma*—the natural, the supernatural, and the personal. In fact, the *upāsanās* aimed not only at intellectual grasp, but also at spiritual identification where all vestige of this lower existence ceased.

To reach this highest identity (speaking relatively), the aspirant has to pass through lesser identities. Reality in its immanent form is visualized in various ways on the personal, natural, and supernatural planes. On the personal or individual plane, the series runs thus: gross body, vital force, thought, intelligence, and bliss; on the material plane, the progress lies from the smaller to the larger and from the grosser to the subtler; and on the supernatural plane, the advance is from the individual presiding deities to their cosmic counterparts. On the cosmic plane, again, first comes the gross, Virāṭ; then the subtle, Hiraṇyagarbha; and lastly the causal, Īśvara—the immanent Brahman (Saguṇa Brahman), beyond which is the transcendental Reality (Nirguṇa Brahman). *Upāsanā* thus consists in 'covering all this with God', as the *Īśa Upaniṣad* puts it, through progressive stages.

MEDITATION THROUGH SELF-IDENTIFICATION

And this brings us to a unique characteristic of the Upaniṣads. They not only searched for the Infinite, but found it to be identical with the Self in all. They first realized 'Brahman is all this',[30] and then 'I am Brahman'.[31] And so the task before the Upaniṣads was how to prepare the aspirants for that realization of unity. As a potent means of accomplishing this, they hit upon *ahaṁgraha-upāsanā* or meditation based on self-identification in which the individual thinks of himself as Brahman.

Thus in one meditation, Virāṭ (the gross cosmic Person) is thought of as food, which is raised by stages from the ordinary to the cosmic plane, where everything is seen to merge in its cause, which is considered to be the eater of food. This final eater again is no other than Virāṭ; and eating, too, is Virāṭ. When thus everything has been reduced to Virāṭ, and cause

[30] *Chā. U.*, III.14.1.
[31] *Bṛ. U.*, I.4.10.

and effect have lost their duality, the meditator identifies himself with the non-dual Virāṭ. This, by the way, is what is known as the *saṁvarga-vidyā* or the meditation on the mergence of everything in the cosmic Person as identified with the Self.[32] Similarly, also in other cases. The highest *upāsanā* is given in the *Śāṇḍilya-vidyā*, where Brahman is presented as identified with everything that is good, noble, and beautiful; and the meditator then thinks himself to be no other than Brahman thus qualified.[33]

The Upaniṣadic seers did not rest satisfied with an objective direction of the mind, as is usual in the path of devotion and duty, or subjective withdrawal, as is done in *yoga*. They combined the two processes and reaped the highest benefit in the form of *aparokṣānubhūti* (immediate realization) of the Self as Brahman, of the microcosm as the macrocosm. Their life's goal lay not in the mere realization of an isolated Self, but in realizing their identity with God in all His fullness—in His transcendence and immanence.

It is this final objective that gave the direction to *upāsanā*, which was not allowed to be alienated from life, but through which life was to be progressively spiritualized. It is in this realistic attitude leading to the highest realization that the present-day worth of Upaniṣadic *upāsanā* lies.

[32] *Chā. U.*, IV.3.
[33] *Ibid.*, III.14.4.

PART IV

JAINISM AND BUDDHISM

ŚRAMAṆA OR NON-BRĀHMAṆICAL SECTS

THE philosophical schools of India, speaking broadly, may be grouped as Brāhmaṇic and non-Brāhmaṇic, the former being referred to as *āstika* and the latter *nāstika*. *Āstika* denotes the systems which recognize the Vedas and their branches as supreme authority. It does not, as in the West, denote 'theism'. Sāṁkhya, for instance, is an atheistic philosophy, yet it is regarded as a Brāhmaṇic system, since it has accepted the authority of the Vedas. Buddhism and Jainism are considered to be non-Brāhmaṇic, because they do not recognize the authority of the Vedas. According to another interpretation, *āstika* is one who believes in the existence of the future world etc. According to this interpretation, the Buddhists and the Jains cannot be called *nāstikas*. Nāgārjuna implies it when he says, 'A *nāstika* is doomed to hell'.[1] Manu, on the other hand, defines *nāstika* as a person who challenges the authority of the Vedas (*nāstiko Vedanindakaḥ*).[2]

As already stated, it will be a misnomer to dub the Buddhists and the Jains as *nāstikas*. It will be much more fitting and appropriate, if we call them *avaidikas* (non-Vedic sects). Buddhist literature appears to speak of all the non-Brāhmaṇic systems as Śramaṇas in the frequent expression '*samaṇā vā brāhmaṇā vā*'. Here 'Brāhmaṇa' appears to refer to orthodox schools. According to the tradition preserved in the Tamil literature, Śramaṇa represents three sects, viz. Aṇuvādins (Pakudha Kaccāyana's sect), Ājīvikas (Ājīvakas), and Jains. The Buddhists are spoken of separately as Śākyas.

Of these Śramaṇa sects, Buddhism and Jainism occupy the foremost rank. There are materials in abundance, both literary and otherwise, to understand the real attitude taken up by them in the matter of religion and philosophy. But, side by side with Buddhism and Jainism, there were other sects having no independent literary documents as their scriptures. They are frequently referred to for criticism by the Buddha and Mahāvīra in their discourses. The common features of all these religious bodies were:

(1) They challenged the authority of the Vedas.

(2) They admitted into their Church all members of the community, irrespective of their social rank and religious career (*varṇa* and *āśrama*).

(3) They observed a set of ethical principles.

[1] A verse from his *Ratnāvalī* cited in the *Madhyamaka-vṛtti* (Bib. Bud. IV), p. 135.
[2] *Manu Smṛti*, II. 11.

(4) They practised a detached life with a view to liberating themselves from the worldly life etc.

(5) They could take to a life of renunciation (*pravrajya*) any time after passing over the minor age.

Brahmacarya (the period of Vedic learning) had a quite different connotation for Buddhists and such others, though they preserved the practice of 'begging the food' (*bhikṣācarya*). Such religious bodies are known to us only through references to their teachers and tenets scattered in the vast literature of the Buddhists and Jains. The religious teachers whom the Buddha described as heretic (*titthiya* = *tīrthakara*) are: Pūraṇa Kassapa, Pakudha Kaccāyana, Makkhali Gosāla, Ajita Keśakambalin, Sañjaya Belaṭṭhiputta, and Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta.[3]

We shall deal here only with those teachers of sects, other than Buddhism and Jainism, who are less known. The following brief account of their views can be gathered from the Jaina and Buddhist literature, which, however, may not always represent their best side.

I. PŪRAṆA KASSAPA (THE SECT OF AKRIYĀVĀDINS)

We learn from the Buddhist records that Pūraṇa Kassapa (Pūrṇa Kāśyapa) was an old and respectable teacher (*tīrthakara*) leading a religious body. He was, most probably, born in a Brāhmaṇa family, as his name indicates. The name Pūraṇa (= Pūrṇa) shows that he was fully enlightened and perfect in wisdom. It is reported that King Ajātaśatru once visited him, on which occasion the latter expounded his views thus: 'To him who acts or causes another to act, mutilates or causes another to mutilate, punishes or causes another to punish, causes grief or torment, trembles or causes another to tremble, kills other creatures, takes what is not given, breaks into houses, commits dacoity or robbery or tells lies, to him thus acting, there is no guilt . . . no increase of guilt would ensue. . . . In giving alms, in offering sacrifices, in self-mastery, in control of senses, and in speaking truth, there is neither merit nor increase of merit.'[4] This is called an exposition of 'no-action' theory (Akriyāvāda).

Jaina Sūtras also attribute similar views to him. This, probably, may not represent the correct view of Kassapa, for no system of thought in India, except the materialistic Cārvāka, is known to deny any merit or demerit to actions. Most probably, he was, as Barua states, an advo-

[3] We have another list in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* which mentions ten heretic sects by their collective names: Ājīvika, Nigaṇṭha, Muṇḍasāvaka, Jaṭilaka, Paribbājaka, Magaṇḍika, Tedaṇḍika, Aviruddhaka, Gotamaka, and Devadhammika—Rhys Davids, *Dialogues of the Buddha* (Sacred Books of the Buddhists, 1923), I. p. 220.

[4] Rhys Davids, *op. cit.*, I. pp. 69-70 (as abridged by H. Ui in his *Vaiśeṣika Philosophy*, p. 21).

cate of the theory that the soul was passive (*niṣkriya*), no action could affect it, and it was beyond good and bad—a view which many previous Vedic thinkers have enunciated. There must be some truth when Śīlāṅka, a Jaina commentator, identifies Kassapa's doctrine with the Sāṁkhya view.[5]

It is further reported, in the words of the Buddha, that no *hetu* (cause) and no *paccaya* (condition) are accepted by Pūraṇa Kassapa for one's becoming either defiled or purified.[6] Abhaya, again, says that Kassapa accepts no cause for *ñāṇa* (knowledge) and *dassana* (insight).[7] These passages tend to point out that Kassapa was an upholder of Ahetuvāda (no-cause theory). Hence Barua tries to bring his view under *adhicca-samuppāda* (fortuitous origin),[8] referred to in the *Brahmajāla-Sutta*, i.e. Ahetuvāda. The Buddha's teaching alone is said to be Hetuvāda, whereas that of others is Ahetuvāda.

In the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*,[9] we find two Lokāyatika Brāhmaṇas stating to the Buddha that Pūraṇa Kassapa asserts himself to be always in possession of *ñāṇadassana* (introspective knowledge), while walking or staying etc., and that he perceives the finite world through infinite knowledge (*anantena ñāṇena antavantaṁ lokaṁ jānaṁ*), while they attribute to Nigaṇṭha the theory of perceiving the finite world through finite knowledge. In another passage,[10] the Buddha is said to have represented Kassapa, along with the other heretic teachers, as possessing the power of telling that a particular dead person was reborn in a certain place. Ānanda ascribes to him Makkhali Gosāla's doctrine of six classes of human beings (*chalābhijātiyo*), such as *kaṇhābhijāti* (black class of being), *nīlābhijāti* (blue class of being), etc.,[11] which evidently shows that Ānanda made a mess of the doctrines of Gosāla and Kassapa.[12]

II. PAKUDHA KACCĀYANA (THE SECT OF AṆUVĀDINS)

According to the Buddhist records, Pakudha Kaccāyana (Prakruddha Kātyāyana) was one of the six heretic teachers (*titthiyas*). He was a leader of some religious body and was held in great esteem by the people of the

[5] B. M. Barua, *A History of Pre-Buddhistic Indian Philosophy* (Calcutta University, 1921), p. 279.
[6] *Saṁyutta Nikāya*, III. p. 69.
[7] *Ibid.*, V. p. 69.
[8] H. Ui says that Gosāla's opinion is referred to in the *Brahmajāla-Sutta* under *adhicca-samuppannika* (*op. cit.*, p. 22, f.n. 1).
[9] IV. pp. 428-29.
[10] *Saṁyutta Nikāya*, IV. p. 398.
[11] *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, III. pp. 383-84.
[12] *The Nīlakeci* (*Nīlakeśi*), a Jaina treatise in Tamil, tells us that Gosāla also had the title 'Pūraṇa'. See N. A. Sastri, 'Ājīvakas', *Journal of Sri Venkateshwara Oriental Institute* (Tirupati, 1941), II. p. 418.

time. Buddhaghoṣa says that Pakudha is his personal name and Kaccāyana his family (*gotra*) name. The term '*pakudha*' has been traditionally interpreted as '*prakruddha*' (furious). This interpretation is supported by another reading '*prakruddha*' in the *Sumaṅgala-vilāsinī*.[13] Its alternative form is '*kakudha*' or '*kakuddha*' which means the same thing. It is also used as a personal name for Koliyaputta,[14] who was attending on Mahāmoggallāna. Barua, assuming '*kakuda*' to be the original and correct form meaning 'a man having a hump on his back', connects this Kātyāyana with Kabandhī Kātyāyana, one of the pupils of the sage Pippalāda of the *Praśna Upaniṣad*.[15] The suggestion, though ingenious, lacks a convincing proof. Kabandhī Kātyāyana, on the other hand, is said to be one of the *Brahmaniṣṭhas* in the Upaniṣad. Buddhaghoṣa records that Kaccāyana never used to touch cold water. He never even crossed the river or a marshy pathway, lest his vow should be transgressed.[16]

As to his philosophy, we have mainly two sources, namely, *Sāmañña-phala-Sutta* and *Sūtrakṛtāṅga*, of which the former represents Kaccāyana as saying: 'The following seven things are neither made nor commanded to be made, neither created nor caused to be created ; they are barren (so that nothing is produced out of them), steadfast as a mountain peak, as a pillar firmly fixed. They move not, neither do they vary ; they trench not one upon another, nor avail aught as to ease (pleasure) or pain or both. And what are the seven? The four elements—earth, water, fire, and air—, and ease (pleasure) and pain, and the soul as a seventh. So there is neither slayer nor causer of slaying, hearer or speaker, knower or explainer. When one with sharp sword cleaves a head in twain, no one thereby deprives any one of life, a sword has only penetrated into the interval between seven elementary substances.'[17] It appears from this passage that Kaccāyana accepted seven elementary substances as permanent and eternal, neither created nor caused to be created. This fundamental principle of seven elements is also corroborated by the Tamil sources.[18] The *Sūtrakṛtāṅga*, on the other hand, presents the system of six categories omitting pleasure and pain, adding ether or space in their place. H. Ui has rightly pointed out that if this Sassatavāda (Eternalism) is developed, 'the resultant must be the atomic theory'.[19] It is likely that this Sassatavāda is the same as Aṇuvāda, atom-theory, of the Tamil texts. According to the Tamil tradition, Aṇuvāda of the Kātyāyana sect is more intimately associated with the Ājīvikas, and appeared some time after them.

[13] Published by Pali Text Society, p. 144.
[14] *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, III. p. 122.
[15] *A History of Pre-Buddhistic Indian Philosophy*, p. 227.
[16] *Sumaṅgala-vilāsinī* (P.T.S.), p. 144.
[17] *Dialogues of the Buddha*, I. p. 74.
[18] N. A. Sastri, *op. cit.*, p. 407.
[19] *Op. cit.*, p. 23.

The eternal elements, earth, water, etc., unite or separate automatically without any volitional activity. The two elements, pleasure and pain, stand for some factors calling forth a union of those elements, just like *adṛṣṭa* in the Vaiśeṣika system. Barua has well remarked that Kātyāyana cannot be denied his rightful claim to be singled out as the Empedocles of India, for, according to both, the four elements are root-things and the formative principle is two-fold: 'love' and 'hatred' for Empedocles, and 'pleasure' and 'pain' for Kātyāyana.[20]

III. MAKKHALI GOSĀLA (THE ĀJIVIKA SECT)

Makkhali Gosāla (Maskari Gośāla) was the leader of the Ājīvika sect. Before Gosāla, there were two leaders of the sect, viz. Nanda Vaccha and Kisa Saṅkicca. Gosāla is said to have been born somewhere near Śrāvasti, and left home for some unknown reason and became a homeless wanderer. His career as a wanderer covers about 24 years, of which the first six[21] he spent at Paṇiyabhūmi together with Mahāvīra. He parted company with the latter on account of doctrinal differences, and went to Śrāvasti, where he attained Jinahood and became the leader of the Ājīvika sect. He died sixteen years before Mahāvīra, who predeceased the Buddha at least by a few years. In the *Bhagavatī-Sūtra*, Gosāla is stated to have been a disciple of Mahāvīra at Nālandā, but it is not admissible.

The name of this teacher is variously spelt: Makkhali Gosāla in Pali, Maṅkhaliputta Gosāla in Ardha-Māgadhī, and Markali in Tamil. Buddhaghoṣa, giving a fanciful etymology[22] for Makkhali, viz. '*Tāta, mā khaliḥ*' (My dear man, take care lest you stumble), assumes that he was a servant in the household of a wealthy man, who warns him thus. The Jaina tradition derives Maṅkhaliputta as 'son of a *maṅkhali*', a mendicant who carries about the picture (of a deity) for collecting alms. His father, Maṅkhali, once came to Śaravaṇa and, failing to obtain any other shelter, he took refuge for the rainy season in the cowshed (*gośālā*) of a wealthy Brāhmaṇa, Gobahula, where Maṅkhali's wife Bhaddā brought forth a son, who became known as Gosāla Maṅkhaliputta.[23] Makkhali in Pali or Markali in Tamil is Maskarin in Sanskrit. Chinese tradition records his name as Maskari Gosāliputra and explains that Maskari is his *gotra* name and Gosāli is his mother's name. So he was Gosāliputra, son of Gosāli.[24] According to

[20] *A History of Pre-Buddhistic Indian Philosophy*, pp. 283-84.

[21] Only one year according to the *Kalpa-Sūtra*. See Amulya Chandra Sen, *Schools and Sects in Jaina Literature* (Visva Bharati Studies No. 3, Calcutta, 1931), p. 8. According to the *Bhagavatī-Sūtra*, six years. See Barua, *Ājīvikas*, p. 7.

[22] Barua, *Ājīvikas* (Calcutta University, 1920), p. 11.

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 9.

[24] See *Chinese Encyclopaedia*, VI. pp. 820-21.

Pāṇini (VI.1.154), *maskarin* was a wanderer who carried a *maskara* (bamboo staff) about him.[25]

Hoernle remarks that the name 'Ājīvikas' was not taken by themselves, but was given to them by their opponents. Gosāla by his conduct laid himself open to the charge of insincerity, in that he practised religious mendicancy not as a means of gaining salvation (*mokṣa*), but as a means of gaining livelihood. Rhys Davids thinks that Ājīvikas are 'those who claimed to be especially strict in earning their means of livelihood'.[26] It may not be improbable that they earned their livelihood by some profession such as fortune-telling, astrology, divination, etc.[27] That astrology was almost a profession with the Ājīvikas is confirmed by an old tradition preserved in a Jātaka and the *Divyāvadāna*.[28] This tradition fits in with their philosophical standpoint, viz. fatalism.

From the account narrated in the *Bhagavatī-Sūtra*, it is presumed that the scriptures of the Ājīvikas consisted of ten Puvvas, i.e. eight Mahānimittas and two Maggas, like the fourteen Pūrvas of the Jains.[29] The dialect adopted as a literary medium for their scripture was closely allied to Ardha-Māgadhī, a few stereotyped fragments of which have survived in the Jaina and Buddhist literatures. The South Indian tradition mentions as their scripture some treatise known as *Navakadir* (Nine Rays), which, most probably, comprised nine groups of works embodying the teaching of Maskarin. This work might be a Tamil redaction of the original Prakrit, previously mentioned.[30] It is most unfortunate that this important work on the sect is no more traceable.

HIS ETHICAL TEACHINGS

We often find statements to the effect that the Ājīvikas adhered to a severe form of asceticism. The *Nīlakeci*, a Tamil treatise of the Jains, states that Gosāla exhorted his disciples to abide by strict moral observances, and that they observed *śīlas*, though they denied their efficacy.[31] The author of the *Śivajñāna-śittiyār*, while describing some common features of the Śramaṇas other than the Buddhists, states that the Ājīvikas worship the *aśoka* tree as God, deny the authority of the Vedas, practise severe asceticism, keep their

[25] The historical significance of the word had already been lost sight of by the time of the *Mahābhāṣya* which interprets the term in a quite fanciful manner: *Mā kṛta karmāṇi, mā kṛta karmāṇi, śāntir vaḥ śreyasītyāha; ato maskarī parivrājakaḥ.*

[26] *Op. cit.*, I. p. 221.

[27] Vide *Udāna*, VIII. 13.

[28] Barua, *Ājīvikas* (Calcutta University, 1920), p. 68. This seems to be supported by the epithet '*lagnājīvaka*' used for the Ājīvika sect in the *Vajrasūci*.

[29] Barua, *Ājīvikas*, pp. 43, 47-51. See also B. C. Law, *India as Described in the Early Texts of Buddhism and Jainism* (Luzac & Co., London, 1941), pp. 265-66 for detailed information of their literature.

[30] N. A. Sastri, *op. cit.*, p. 405.

[31] *Ibid.*, pp. 405-6.

body dirty (for want of daily bathing), give up household life, cover their nakedness with mat-clothing, and carry in their hand a bunch of peacock feathers.[32] The *Bhagavatī-Sūtra* says that they abstained from eating five kinds of fruits, viz. *umbara* (*ficus glomerata*), *vaṭa* (*ficus Indica*), *bora* (jujube), *satara* (?), and *pilankhu* (*ficus infectoria*), and also abstained from eating roots etc.

The *Sthānāṅga-Sūtra* says that the Ājīvikas practise four kinds of austerities, viz. severe austerities, fierce austerities, abstention from ghee and other delicacies, and indifference to pleasant and unpleasant food.[33] They are said to observe the fourfold *brahmacarya* consisting of: (1) *tapassitā*, asceticism; (2) *lūkhacariyā*, austerity; (3) *jeguccitā*, comfort-loathing; and (4) *pavivittatā*, solitude. The *Aupapādika-Sūtra* describes the system of collecting alms of the Ājīvika ascetics. Some of them beg in every second or third or fourth or fifth or sixth, or even in every seventh house; there are some who accept lotus-stalks only as alms under certain conditions; some beg in every house, but do not accept alms if there is a flash of lightning. There are some ascetics who practise penances by entering into big earthen vessels. It is stated also that they were men of right living, and in this mode of right living, they were followed by both the Jains and the Buddhists.

The *Sāmaññaphala-Sutta*, however, says that in the opinion of Gosāla, no spiritual development can take place by moral observances. It is rather difficult to make out why the Ājīvikas should enjoin the moral observances and in the same breath deny their efficacy. It is likely that Gosāla approved, in pursuance of time-honoured fashion, the moral and religious observances, even though they were ineffective in doing any good. This may be evident from his strong plea that one gained the final deliverance solely by virtue of transmigrations (*saṁsāra-śuddhi*).

HIS PHILOSOPHY

The *Bhagavatī-Sūtra* gives the following account of his philosophy. An experiment was made by Gosāla together with Mahāvīra taking as specimen a large sesamum plant (*tila-thambha*) which being uprooted and destroyed, reappeared in due time. Gosāla drew therefrom the conclusion that all living beings are subject to reanimation (*pautta parihāraṁ parihanti*).[34] All those who reach final beatitude will have to pass through 84,00,000 great *kalpas*, and then seven births as a deity, seven as a bulky (insensible)

[32] *Ibid.*, p. 413.
[33] A. C. Sen, *Schools and Sects in Jaina Literature*, p. 11.
[34] Rockhill, *The Life of the Buddha* (Trübner & Co., London, 1884), pp. 250-51; and Barua, *A History of Pre-Buddhistic Indian Philosophy*, p. 301, f.n. 1.

being, seven as a sensible being, and seven with changes of body through reanimation; and having thus gradually expiated the 5,00,000 deeds and the 60,603 minor deeds, they will reach final beatitude.[35]

Another account of his doctrine can be gathered from the *Sāmañña-phala-Sutta*. All beings and souls are without force, power, and energy of their own. They get transformed by their fate (*niyati*), by the necessary conditions of the class to which they belong (*saṅgati*), and by their individual nature (*bhāva-pariṇatā*). They experience pleasure and pain according to their position in one or other of the six classes of existences.

There are 84,00,000 periods during which both fools and wise alike, wandering in transmigration, shall at last make an end of pain. Though the wise should hope 'by this virtue or this performance of duty, or this penance or this righteousness, will I make the *karma* (I have inherited) that is not yet mature, mature', and though the fool should hope, by some means, to get gradually rid of *karma* that has matured—neither of them can do it. Pleasure and pain cannot be altered in the course of transmigration; there can be neither increase nor decrease thereof, neither excess nor deficiency. Just as when a ball of string is cast forth, it will spread out just as far as, and no farther than, it can unwind, just so, both the fools and the wise, transmigrating exactly for the allotted term, shall then, and only then, make an end of pain.[36]

From the Tamil texts, we learn that the Ājīvikas admitted five kinds of atoms: earth, water, fire, air, and life. Of these, only life is endowed with knowledge and others are not. They are beginningless, eternal, and indivisible. They can severally assemble together and assume varied forms, such as mountain, bamboo, diamond, etc. Only a man of divine vision can perceive single atoms. Pleasure and pain are atomic. The life-atom, which is imperceptible, becomes embodied through its own *karma*. Only an *arhat* can perceive it. It can, by its nature, enter into all things constituted of four kinds of atoms. When it enters into a body, it takes all the qualities of the body as its own.[37] The Jīva knows by means of contact, pressing on, and mingling with, the corporeal things.[38]

There are six classes of beings—black, blue-black, green, red, yellow, and white.[39] The final stage is Release (*vīḍu*), which is extremely white. There are two kinds of released persons, *sambodhaka* and *maṇḍala*. The *Śittiyār* describes the functions of these two types of persons thus: the former remains always in the highest stage of life, while the latter comes

[35] Rockhill, *op. cit.*, *p.* 253.
[36] *Dialogues of the Buddha*, I. pp. 71-73.
[37] Cf. *Majjhima Nikāya*, I. No. 35, pp. 230-33.
[38] N. A. Sastri, *op. cit.*, pp. 407-9.
[39] According to *Maṇimekalai*. The *Śittiyār* reads: white, yellow, red, blue, extremely white, and green.

down on earth to impart the sacred scriptures to the world. The *Nīlakeci* remarks here that in case all Jīvas attain *mokṣa*, the spring of *saṁsāra* will dry up. So they invented the doctrine of *maṇḍala-mokṣa*, according to which Jīvas that have attained *mokṣa* may come to *saṁsāra* in order to keep the latter going.[40]

There are eight kinds of results determinable at the stage of embryo: acquisition, loss, obstruction by impediments, migration to other place, suffering misery, enjoying pleasure, losing what is obtained, and birth and death. It is to be noted that the *Bhagavatī-Sūtra* mentions only six, omitting the third and the fourth.

This sect originated in North India, perhaps at Śrāvasti, and flourished for several centuries, probably beginning with the early part of the sixth century B.C.[41] It enjoyed royal gifts from the great emperor Aśoka, who dedicated two cave-dwellings to the sect. It continued to exist in the Middle Country till the fifth century A.D. Barua traced references to the sect in Varāhamihira's *Bṛhatsaṁhitā* and Bāṇa's *Harṣacarita*. In the former, it is mentioned under the name of Ekadaṇḍin (one-staff man), while in the latter, under the name of Maskarin. It appears that the sect was patronized by King Daśaratha, the grandson of Aśoka, for three cave dedications in the Nāgārjuni Hills were made by him.[42] It may be noted that the sect has been referred to in the *Mahāvaṁsa* (X.102) as one of the flourishing religions in Ceylon during the reign of King Pāṇḍukābhaya (377-307 B.C.).

The sect must have continued in existence in South India till as late as the thirteenth or fourteenth century A.D., the time of the *Śivajñāna-śittiyār*, which furnishes a vivid picture of the sect and its creed. This conclusion has been happily corroborated by references collected by Professor Pathak from the Digambara Jaina works in the Karṇāṭaka country.[43] Though the Jaina works confound the Ājīvikas with the Buddhists, yet they prove beyond doubt that they were well known to the Jaina authors of the late Cālukya and Yādava periods as a sect of the Buddhists who lived on *kañji* (rice-gruel).[44]

IV. AJITA KEŚAKAMBALIN (THE MATERIALISTS)

Ajita Keśakambalin is another of the six non-Brāhmaṇic teachers mentioned in the Buddhist and Jaina records. He was held in great esteem by the people. He was the earliest representative of Indian Materialism.

[40] N. A. Sastri, *op. cit.*, p. 419.
[41] According to Barua seventh or eighth century B.C. Bühler is also of the opinion that the founder of the sect may be placed about 750 B.C.
[42] Barua, *Ājīvikas*, p. 70. These Nāgārjuni Hills are near Buddha-Gayā.
[43] *Indian Antiquary* (1912), pp. 88 f.
[44] Cf. Barua, *Ājīvikas*, pp. 77, 79.

He was called Keśakambalin, because he put on a blanket of human hair. His metaphysics may be summed up as follows:

A human being is built of the four elements (*cātummahābhūtiko ayaṁ puriso*). When he dies, the earthy in him relapses to earth, the fluid to water, the heat to fire, the windy to air, and his faculties (*indriyāṇi*, five senses and the mind as the sixth) pass into space (*ākāśa*). Four men carry the bier, eulogizing the dead man till they reach the burning ground. His body having been cremated, the bones turn into the colour of a dove's wing, and his sacrifices end in ashes. Alms-giving is the preaching of such fools who speak of the existence (of the soul etc.) and speak vain things and untruth. When the body dies, both the foolish and the wise alike perish. They do not survive after death.[45]

As a corollary to this radical materialism, the ethical and religious teaching of this school was: There is no merit in sacrifice or offering; no resultant fruit from good and evil deeds. No one passes from this world to the next. No benefit results from the service rendered to mother and father. There is no afterlife. There are no ascetics or Brāhmaṇas who have reached perfection by following the right path, and who, as a result of knowledge, have experienced this world as well as the next and can proclaim the same.[46]

It is evident from the above that Ajita was a nihilist in metaphysics and antinomian in ethics. It is to be further noted that he postulated no solution for the phenomenon of knowledge. The materialists of the later days, however, have attempted to solve it in this way. When the four elements constituted the body, the spirit (*caitanya*) came into existence automatically. The Materialism of classical literature is attributed to the sage Bṛhaspati. The school is called Cārvāka in the *Sarva-darśana-saṅgraha* of Mādhava, and Lokāyata in the *Ṣaḍdarśana-samuccaya* of Haribhadra. The Lokāyata or Lokāyatika was not unknown to the Buddhist authors. But what is meant by the term '*lokāyata*' in Pali Nikāyas is interesting to note. The following conversation between a *lokāyatika* Brāhmaṇa and the Buddha has been recorded in the *Saṁyutta Nikāya* (II.77):

The Brāhmaṇa:	Does everything exist (*sabbaṁ atthi*)?
The Buddha:	To say that everything exists is the first view of the worldling (*lokāyataṁ*).
The Brāhmaṇa:	Does not everything exist (*sabbaṁ na'tthi*)?
The Buddha:	To say so is the second view of the worldling.

[45] *Sāmaññaphala-Sutta* (*Dīgha Nikāya*, I. No. 2), 23.
[46] *Ibid.*

The Brāhmaṇa:	Is everything one and identical (*sabbaṁ ekattaṁ*)?
The Buddha:	To say so is the third view of the worldling.
The Brāhmaṇa:	Is everything separate (*sabbaṁ puthuttaṁ*)?
The Buddha:	To say so is the fourth view of the worldling.

Therefore the Buddha preaches *dhamma* (i.e. the law of causation) of the middle path, avoiding the above two extremes.

V. SAÑJAYA BELAṬṬHIPUTTA (THE SCEPTICS)

Sañjaya, son of Belaṭṭhi or Vairāṭi, was also one of the religious leaders of the sixth century B.C., and probably an elder contemporary of the Buddha. He is believed to be identical with Parivrājaka Sañjaya, teacher of Sāriputta and Moggallāna. Parivrājaka Suppiya was another follower of Sañjaya. He was reputed for an opinion which was a scepticism on the one hand and a primitive stage of criticism of knowledge on the other, like that of the Sophists in the Greek philosophy.[47] His scepticism on metaphysical questions may be summed up as follows:

'If you ask me whether there is future existence (*atthi paraloko*), well, if I believed that there was, I should say so. But I do not say so. And I do not say it is thus or this. And I do not say it is otherwise, and I do not say that it is not so, nor do I say it is not not so. If you ask me whether there is no future existence (*na'tthi paraloko*), well, if I believed . . . If you ask me whether there is and is not another world (*atthi ca na'tthi ca paraloko*), well, if I believed . . . If you ask me whether there neither is nor is not another world (*n'ev'atthi no na'tthi paraloko*), well, if I believed . . .'[48]

A follower of this sect has been described in the *Brahmajāla-Sutta* (37) as Amarāvikkhepika, who, when asked a question, would equivocate and wriggle out like an eel. Barua thinks that the Aviruddhakas mentioned in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* were also followers of Sañjaya—that they were called Amarāvikkhepikas for their philosophical doctrines and Aviruddhakas for their moral conduct.

[47] H. Ui, *op. cit.*, p. 23.
[48] *Sāmaññaphala-Sutta*, 31.

23

JAINISM: ITS HISTORY, PRINCIPLES, AND PRECEPTS

HISTORICAL SURVEY

THE Jains claim a great antiquity for their religion. Their earliest prophet was Ṛṣabhadeva, who is mentioned even in the *Viṣṇu* and *Bhāgavata Purāṇas* as belonging to a very remote past. In the earliest Brāhmaṇic literature are found traces of the existence of a religious Order which ranged itself strongly against the authority of the Vedas and the institution of animal sacrifice. According to the Jaina tradition, at the time of the *Mahābhārata* war, this Order was led by Neminātha, who is said to have belonged to the same Yādava family as Kṛṣṇa and who is recognized as the twenty-second Tīrthaṅkara. The Order gathered particular strength during the eighth century B.C. under Pārśvanātha, the twenty-third Tīrthaṅkara, who was born at Vārāṇasi. This Order we may call the *śramaṇa saṅgha* (as distinct from the Vedic Order), which later became divided into the Jaina and the Buddhist Orders under Mahāvīra and the Buddha, respectively.

Mahāvīra, also known as Vardhamāna, the twenty-fourth and last of the Tīrthaṅkaras, was born 250 years after Pārśvanātha, and this, according to a Jaina traditional era still current, corresponds to 599 B.C. His father was the chief of Kauṇḍinyapura near Vaiśālī, which is now the village Basarh, some twenty-seven miles to the north of Patna. His mother was Triśalā Devī, the daughter of the Licchavi king of Vaiśālī. From his early childhood, Mahāvīra had a reflective mind. After undergoing all the education and training usual for princes of the time, he realized the transitory nature of the world and became an ascetic at the age of thirty. He practised hard penance and meditation for twelve years, in the course of which he had to bear many persecutions at the hands of the ignorant, till, at last, he attained enlightenment. He then began to preach his doctrines to the people. The basic creed propounded by Mahāvīra consisted of five vows and twenty-two endurances as shown subsequently. His chief contribution was the popularization of the principle of *ahiṁsā* (non-injury), on the basis of which he elaborated an ethical code for householders as well as for monks, and, as its background, he put forward the philosophy of the seven *tattvas* (realities). He organized the Jaina community, to which he admitted all aspirants irrespective of caste or sex, and inaugurated a system of peaceful proselytization. This he did for thirty years and won a large number of

followers, both monks and householders. He abandoned his mortal body at the age of seventy-two, in 527 B.C.

Mahāvīra left behind him a strongly organized religious Order, through whose efforts the animal sacrifices fell into disuse and non-violence became firmly established as a rule of life even amongst those classes of people who did not join the Order. His followers gradually spread over the whole country. Jaina monks were to be found on the banks of the Sindhu already at the time of Alexander's invasion. A band of Jaina monks under Bhadrabāhu migrated to the South and spread the religion throughout the Deccan, with Shravanabelgola in Mysore as their central seat. Royal patronage was also bestowed upon the faith, and it is claimed that the great Maurya emperor Candragupta himself joined Bhadrabāhu's march to the South as his disciple. A very old rock inscription at Shravanabelgola commemorates his visit to the South ; a cave is dedicated to him, and the hill on which it exists is known as Candragiri.

During the second century B.C., King Khāravela of Kaliṅga professed Jainism and promoted its cause by setting up Jaina images himself. During the early centuries of the Christian era, Mathura in the North and Shravanabelgola in the South formed important centres of Jaina activities, as is proved by a large number of inscriptions, images, and other monuments discovered at both places. From the fifth to the twelfth century the various royal dynasties of the South, such as the Gaṅgas, Kadambas, Cālukyas, and Rāṣṭrakūṭas, accorded their patronage to the faith. Some of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa kings of Mānyakheṭa, from the eighth to the tenth century, showed a special leaning towards Jainism and gave a great impetus to the development of Jaina art and literature. Many Jaina poets of great repute flourished under them. Vīrasena wrote his monumental works, the *Dhavalā* and the *Jayadhavalā*, in exposition of the *Ṣaṭkhaṇḍāgama*, under Jagattuṅga and his successor. Jinasena and Guṇabhadra composed the *Mahāpurāṇa* at the time of King Amoghavarṣa, when Mahāvīrācārya also wrote his work on mathematics. Amoghavarṣa himself was an author, and his *Ratnamālikā*, though a Jaina work, became very popular with people of all sects, and it has frequently been imitated. He is said to have become a Jaina monk in the latter part of his life. There is epigraphical evidence of the fact that one of his successors, Indra IV, died by the Jaina form of renunciation. The famous Apabhraṁśa poet Puṣpadanta was patronized by the ministers of Kṛṣṇa III and his successor. About A.D. 1100, Jainism gained ascendancy in Gujarat, where the Caulukya kings Siddharāja and his son Kumārapāla openly professed Jainism and encouraged the literary and temple-building activities of the Jains. Hemacandra, the author of several works on different topics, religious as well as secular, lived at the court of the latter.

Jainism is one and undivided so far as its philosophy is concerned. But about the beginning of the Christian era, it became split up into two sects called the Digambaras and the Śvetāmbaras, chiefly on the point of certain rules and regulations for the monks, the most important difference being that while the former held that monks could not wear any clothes, the latter asserted that they could. During the centuries that followed, further minor splits took place amongst both these sects, the most important of them being one that renounced idol-worship altogether and devoted itself to the worship of the scriptures. These are called Terāpanthīs amongst the Śvetāmbaras and Samaiyās amongst the Digambaras. This sect came into existence not earlier than the sixteenth century.

CULTURAL CONTRIBUTION

The Jains have played a very important rôle in the linguistic development of the country. Sanskrit has all along been the medium of sacred writings and preachings of the Brāhmaṇas and Pali that of the Buddhists. But the Jains utilized the prevailing languages of the different times at different places for their religious propaganda as well as for the preservation of knowledge. In this way, they exercised a predominant influence on the development of the Prakrit languages. They even gave a literary shape to some of the regional languages for the first time.

Mahāvīra preached in the mixed dialect called Ardha-Māgadhī, in order that he might be understood by people speaking both Māgadhī and Śaurasenī, and his teachings were classified into twelve books called Śrutāṅgas. These were preserved by oral tradition for some time, but were subsequently lost. An effort was made in about A.D. 454, during the tenth century after Mahāvīra's *nirvāṇa,* to reconstruct the lost texts, and the result was the present canonical books of the Śvetāmbara Jains which still preserve for us the form of the Ardha-Māgadhī language. Of late, a very rich literature produced by the Jains has come to light, which preserves the form of the language as it was current prior to the evolution of the present-day regional languages, especially Hindi, Gujarati, and Marathi. This language is called Apabhraṁśa. It forms the link between the classical languages, Sanskrit and Prakrit, on the one hand, and the modern regional languages, on the other. The earliest literature in Kannada is of Jaina authorship, and the early Tamil literature also owes much to Jaina writers. The Jains have also produced a rich literature in Sanskrit, both narrative and philosophical, and works on grammar, prosody, lexicography, and mathematics.

The Jains have always taken their due share in the development of arts in the country. They erected *stūpas,* as did the Buddhists, in honour

of their saints, with their accessories of stone railings, decorated gateways, stone umbrellas, elaborate carved pillars, and abundant statues. Early examples of these have been discovered at Mathura. Bundelkhand is full of Jaina images of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The huge statues of Bāhubalin, known as Gomaṭeśvara, at Shravanabelgola and Karkala in Mysore State are among the wonders of the world. The former was erected by Cāmuṇḍarāya, the minister of the Gaṅga king Rācamalla, during the tenth century. The colossal reliefs carved on the rock-face near Gwalior belong to the fifteenth century. The Jains also built cave-temples cut in rocks, the earliest examples of which, belonging to the second century B.C. and later, exist in Orissa, known as Hāthīgumphā caves. Other examples of varying periods exist at Junagadh, Junnar, Osmanabad, and other places. The numerous Jaina places of pilgrimage, such as the Parashnath (Pārśvanātha) Hills, Pavapuri, and Rajgir in Bihar, and Girnar and Palitana in Kathiawar, possess temples and other architectural monuments of different ages. The Jaina marble temples at Mount Abu in Rajasthan, belonging to the eleventh century and later, 'carry to its highest perfection the Indian genius for the invention of graceful patterns and their application to the decoration of masonry'.

PHILOSOPHY

The Jaina philosophy might be summed up in one sentence. The living and the non-living, by coming into contact with each other, forge certain energies which bring about birth, death, and various experiences of life; this process could be stopped, and the energies already forged destroyed, by a course of discipline leading to salvation. A close analysis of this brief statement shows that it involves seven propositions: first, that there is something called the living; secondly, that there is something called the non-living; thirdly, that the two come into contact with each other; fourthly, that the contact leads to the production of some energies; fifthly, that the process of contact could be stopped; sixthly, that the existing energies could also be exhausted; and lastly, that salvation could be achieved. These seven propositions are called the seven *tattvas* or realities by the Jains. The first two great truths are that there is a *jīva* or soul and that there is an *ajīva* or non-soul. These two exhaust between them all that exists in the universe.

JIVA TATTVA

The soul, by itself, is imperceptible, but its presence can be found out by the presence of its characteristic qualities in a material body. Its chief characteristic is consciousness, which is accompanied by sense activity,

respiration, and a certain period of existence in a particular body. There is an infinite number of such souls in the universe, and they retain their individuality throughout, neither destroying it altogether nor merging it in the individuality of any other superior being. In their embodied state, they are divisible into two classes, the immobile (*sthāvara*) and the mobile (*trasa*). The former are of five kinds, according as their body is made up of earth, water, fire, air, or vegetable substance. The first four are very subtle forms of life, while the fifth is gross. All these five classes of beings have only one sense developed in them, that is, the sense of touch, responding thereby only to a stimulus of physical contact.

There is a class of beings still lower than these, called the *nigoda* or group-souls, in which an infinite number of beings have a body and respiration in common. They infest the whole world, not excluding the bodies of men and other animals. They are slowly evolving and serve as a regular supply for replacing beings that pass out of the cycle of birth and death by the attainment of *nirvāṇa*.

The mobile (*trasa*) class of beings is also divided into four kinds, according as they possess two, three, four, or five senses, i.e. the senses of taste, smell, sight, and sound, in addition to that of touch. Oysters are examples of the two-sensed beings; bugs and lice of the three-sensed; mosquitoes, flies, and bees of the four-sensed; and birds, animals, and men of the five-sensed beings. Amongst the last kind, again, there are beings, like men and most of the animals and birds, that possess *saṁjñā* or a faculty to discriminate between the beneficial and the injurious, between the favourable and the unfavourable, while there are some, like a particular kind of reptile in the ocean, that possess no such faculty.

Consciousness being the characteristic of a soul, knowledge is inherent in every living being, but its stage of development differs. Knowledge derived from the observation of nature through the senses (*mati jñāna*) is the first to be acquired and is the most universal. Next come, in gradual order, knowledge of the scriptures or of others' experiences (*śruta jñāna*), of objects remote from one in time and place (*avadhi jñāna*), of another's mind (*manaḥ-paryāya jñāna*), and, lastly, perfect and supreme knowledge of everything (*kevala jñāna*). The first two kinds are possible to any man, the next two to sages, and the last, only to a perfect sage, who has qualified himself for *nirvāṇa* (illumination).

AJIVA TATTVAS

The second reality or *tattva* is *ajīva*, the lifeless substance, whose essential characteristic is that it lacks consciousness. It is of five kinds: The first kind is matter (*pudgala*), which includes everything that is perceptible

by the senses. It could be touched and found to be soft or hard, smooth or rough, heavy or light, cold or hot; it could be tasted and found to be bitter, sour, pungent, saline, or sweet; it may smell good or bad; and it may appear black, blue, yellow, red, or white. Matter constitutes the physical basis of the universe, even as the *jīva tattva* constitutes the psychical. The elements of nature—earth, water, fire, and air—are all gross manifestations of matter, the finest and most subtle form of which is the atom (*paramāṇu*). Even heat, light, shade, and darkness are forms of fine matter, whose particles are constantly in motion (*parispanda*), leading to a perpetual succession of integration and disintegration, with a variety of forms and appearances as the result. In this respect, the Jaina view of matter differs from the atomic theory of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika philosophy, which assumes as many kinds of atoms as there are elements. This matter is as real and eternal as the soul, and its total quantity always remains the same in the universe.

The second kind of *ajīva* is named *dharma*. It is quite imperceptible, though it fills the entire universe of life and matter (*lokākāśa*). It has none of the characteristic qualities of life or matter, but forms the medium of motion, which is possible only through its existence. 'Just as water helps the fish to move about, even so *dharma* makes the movement of soul and matter possible.'

The necessary counterpart of this subtle substance forms the third kind of *ajīva* called *adharma*, which also pervades the whole universe and serves as a medium of rest, 'like the shade of a tree helping the wayfarer to stop for rest'. It will thus be seen that *dharma* and *adharma* are two non-physical, inactive conditions of movement and rest, respectively, conceived as real substances. They should not be confused with righteousness and unrighteousness, for which the terms used in Jainism are *puṇya* and *pāpa*.

The fourth *ajīva* substance is space (*ākāśa*), which, like the preceding two, is non-material. Its nature is to provide space for the existence of all other entities. Unlike the other substances, it is infinite. Only a part of it is occupied by the other substances, and this part is called the *lokākāśa*. The other part which is void is called *alokākāśa*. *Dharma*, *adharma*, and *ākāśa* are, thus, mediums or conditions of motion, rest, and subsistence, respectively, all the three of which are interpenetrating.

The fifth and last *ajīva* substance is time (*kāla*), which also pervades the whole *lokākāśa* in the form of single, independent, minute points that never mix together to form a composite body. It brings about changes or modifications in all the other substances, and it affords them extension in time, which, by itself, is beginningless and endless. For practical purposes (*vyavahāra*), however, *kāla* is divided into limited periods

such as minutes, hours, days, months, years, and ages. These five varieties of *ajīva*, together with the *jīva*, form the six substances (*dravyas*) that exist in the universe.

As to the nature of existence attributed to the six substances, the Jaina system holds that existence consists of three factors operating simultaneously, namely, production, decay, and permanence. From the point of view of the essential nature of a thing, it is permanent and unchanging; but from the point of view of its accidental qualities, it originates and perishes. The soul is permanent in itself, but its relationship with the body begins and ends. The atoms of which gold is made are unchanging, but its form as a chain or a ring originates and perishes. A particular point of space is the same, but its occupants are different at different times. Time is ever the same, but the appearances and events associated with it are frequently changing. This is the case with everything that exists.

SYĀDVĀDA OR ANEKĀNTAVĀDA

The Jains have not been satisfied with merely emphasizing these three aspects of existence, but they have formulated on this basis a system of thought called Anekāntavāda or Syādvāda, which comes to this that we may make seven assertions, seemingly contradictory but perfectly true, about a thing: It is (*syādasti*); it is not (*syānnāsti*); it is and is not (*syādasti-nāsti*); it is indescribable (*syādavaktavyam*); it is and is indescribable (*syādasti ca avaktavyaṁ ca*); it is not and is indescribable (*syānnāsti ca avaktavyaṁ ca*); it is, is not, and is indescribable (*syādasti nāsti ca avaktavyaṁ ca*). A man is the father, and is not the father, and is both—are perfectly intelligible statements, if one understands the point of view from which they are made. In relation to a particular boy he is the father; in relation to another boy he is not the father; in relation to both the boys taken together he is the father and is not the father. Since both the ideas cannot be conveyed in words at the same time, he may be called indescribable; still he is the father and is indescribable; and so on. Thus, the philosophy of Anekānta is neither self-contradictory nor vague or indefinite; on the contrary, it represents a very sensible view of things in a systematized form.

There is yet another approach to the proper understanding of objects and events. When we take a co-ordinated view of things, we are said to be resorting to *naigama naya*. When we are inclined towards generalization, it is *saṅgraha naya*; and when inclined towards particularization, it is *vyavahāra naya*. When a specific point or period of time is of the essence, it is *ṛjusūtra naya*. When differentiation is made according to the usage of language and grammar, it is *śabda naya*. When derivative significance of words is ignored and conventional meaning is accepted, it is *samabhirūḍha*

naya. And lastly, when words are used exactly in their original derivative sense and significance, it is *evambhūta naya*. This is the doctrine of seven approaches (*sapta naya*) to the clarification of knowledge. The first three are grouped under *dravya naya*, and the last four under *paryāya naya*.

KARMIC BODY AND ITS END

We now come to the third *tattva*, the contact of the soul with matter (*āsrava*). There is no God or supreme Being creating, destroying, and recreating the world. Souls exist in the world from time eternal in association with matter. The enjoyment of this association leads to further contact, and so the cycle goes on till the association is brought to an end in such a way as to avoid any fresh contact; salvation is then achieved. The contact takes place in the following way: The soul is always surrounded by a large volume of fine matter called *karma*. This invades the soul and settles down on it whenever the soul is found to be in a state of iniquity, i.e. affected by the activities of the body, mind, or speech, owing to the propelling force of wrong belief or moral failings or passions, namely, anger, pride, deceit, or greed. This contact leads to the formation of what is called the *kārmaṇa śarīra* (body of subtle *karma* matter), corresponding to the *liṅga* or *sūkṣma śarīra* (subtle body) of the Sāṁkhyas, which accompanies the soul throughout life as well as in its migrations from one body to another. That this *kārmaṇa śarīra* is formed of actual matter particles is evident from the fact that it has both weight and colour. Soul, by itself, is very light, the lightest of all substances, and hence, in a pure state, it would fly at once to the highest point of the *lokākāśa*, as far as the existence of *dharma* matter would make movement possible. But it is actually kept down by the weight of its *kārmaṇa śarīra*. The latter also imparts to it a complexion (*leśyā*) that may be dark, blue, grey, yellow, red, or white. The first three of these are regarded as inauspicious and the last three auspicious.

Closely associated with *āsrava* is *bandha* (bondage), the fourth reality. The *kārmaṇa śarīra*, spoken of above, binds the soul in eight different ways, according to the nature of the forces developed in it when the inflow of *karma* takes place. These are called the eight *karmas*. The first two kinds obstruct knowledge and insight (*jñānāvaraṇīya* and *darśanāvaraṇīya*), the third causes delusion in the form of affections and passions (*mohanīya*), the fourth brings about pleasure and pain (*vedanīya*), the fifth determines the length of life (*āyuṣka*), the sixth assigns everything that is associated with personality, i.e. the kind of body, senses, health, complexion, and the like (*nāma*), the seventh determines the social status at birth (*gotra*), and the eighth produces hindrances in the way of realizing virtues and powers (*antarāya*). The time when a particular *karma* will bear fruit and the inten-

sity of its fruition are determined at the very time the kārmic matter flows into the soul. The eight kinds of *karma* have been further subdivided into 144 classes, calculated to account for almost every experience that a man has in life.

As will be seen from what has been said above, the four kinds of *karma*, from the fourth to the seventh, may lead to good and enjoyable results or the reverse. Pious and holy activities of the mind and body give rise to good results and vice versa. This appears like fatalism, but it is not so, because one may, by special efforts, shorten or prolong, transform or suspend, the activity of the *karmas*. It is also open for the individual not only to stop any further bondage, but also to destroy or render ineffectual the existing bondages. This is the subject of the next two realities *saṁvara* and *nirjarā*. By a systematic control of the mental and physical activities, any fresh inflow of the *karmas* may be prevented, while certain austerities would destroy the existing *karmas*. When this is achieved in its fullness, the soul is set free, once for all, and the cycle of birth and death comes to an end. The soul realizes its inherent qualities of supreme knowledge and unlimited happiness. It attains salvation (*mokṣa*), and becomes a perfect being—*siddha*. This is the seventh reality or *tattva*. The measures recommended for bringing about these results form the ethical codes of the householders and the monks.

ETHICAL CODE FOR A HOUSEHOLDER

The most important vows of a householder are five, namely, he shall not do violence to other living beings; he shall speak the truth; he shall not commit theft; he shall not commit adultery; and he shall set a limit to his greed for worldly possessions. These are respectively called the vows of *ahiṁsā*, *satya*, *asteya*, *brahmacarya*, and *aparigraha*.

The observance of even the first vow presents many difficulties. Firstly, What is violence? and secondly, How could one avoid it, even in the ordinary pursuit of his occupation? The answer to the first question is that any action calculated to do injury to other living beings is violence. Killing any being or inflicting a wound upon it or beating it is physical violence; speaking harsh words so as to injure the feelings of others is violence of speech; while thinking ill of others or contemplation of injury is mental violence, as it disturbs the equanimity of one's own soul, even though no harm to others may actually follow. For a householder, it is not possible to avoid all these kinds of violence in their entirety, and therefore he is recommended to discharge his worldly responsibilities with the minimum injury to others. For giving more practical guidance in this matter, injury to others has been analysed, according to the mental attitude

of the individual, into four kinds: (1) accidental, (2) occupational, (3) protective, and (4) intentional. The injury to small living beings, unavoidable in building a house, cooking meals, grinding flour, walking, bathing, and similar other activities of daily life, is violence of the first kind. When a soldier has to fight and strike his enemy, or when an agriculturist has to till the land and carry on other operations involving injury to living beings, the injury belongs to the second kind. If a tiger attacks you and you have to shoot it down, or if you are confronted with a dacoit and have to protect your life and property by striking him in self-defence, the injury is of the third kind. And when you kill men, animals, or other lower creatures simply for the sake of killing, the injury belongs to the fourth kind. The householder is required to abstain fully from the fourth kind of injury, and he should take as much care and caution against loss of life in the other forms as it is possible for him. This means the observance of the vow of *ahiṁsā* in a less rigorous form suitable for a householder, and hence it is called *aṇuvrata* (minor vow). Not that this will cause no kārmic bondage, but it will be of a minor type, its intensity being proportionate to the intensity of the passion of the man committing it and to the grade of life injured. Piercing, binding, overloading, and starving animals are all forms of *hiṁsā*, and should be avoided.

The same kind of concession, as is allowed to a householder in the observance of the vow of *ahiṁsā*, is enjoyed by him in the observance of the other four vows also, and for this reason, they are all called *aṇuvratas.* He should neither speak falsehood himself, nor induce others to do so, nor approve of any such attempt on the part of the others. Spreading false ideas, divulging the secrets of others, back-biting, forging documents, and breach of trust are all forms of untruth, and one must guard oneself against them. It would be theft if one takes away secretly or by force what does not belong to oneself. Appropriating to oneself what another man has forgotten or has dropped, or accepting what he knows to be stolen property, instructing another person in the methods of stealing, adulteration, and use of false weights and measures are all forms of theft and should be abstained from. A householder must keep himself satisfied with his own wife, and should look upon all other women as his mothers, sisters, or daughters. He would be violating the vow of *brahmacarya* even if he talks obscenity. The fifth vow recommends that a householder should fix, beforehand, the limit of his maximum belongings, and should, in no case, exceed it. If he ever happens to earn more than that, he must spend it away in charities, the best and recognized forms of which are distribution of medicines, spread of knowledge by the distribution of religious books and

support of teachers, provision for saving the lives of people in danger, and feeding the hungry and the poor.

From the aspirant's spiritual point of view, the *aṇuvratas* are meant to give him practice in self-denial, self-control, and renunciation. This purpose becomes more pronounced in the next three vows called the *guṇavratas*. He should lay down limits of distance in all the four directions beyond which he shall not travel in his life (*dig-vrata*); he should prescribe further limits of his movements for a specified period of time, according to the requirements in view (*deśa-vrata*); and, lastly, he should set limits on his belongings and occupations for a particular period of time, and should eschew all evil meditations, carelessness about the storing and using of weapons, and misusing his influence by doing evil or persuading others to do so (*anartha-daṇḍa-vrata*).

The next four vows take him a step further. They are called *śikṣāvratas* or instructive vows, because they initiate him directly in the ascetic practices. The first of the instructive vows is contemplation (*sāmāyika*). Retiring with as few encumbrances, such as clothes, as possible to a quiet place, be it a temple or a private dwelling or forest, where he is not likely to be disturbed, he should stand erect, or squat on the ground, or even recline if that be more convenient to him. He should then mentally renounce, for the time being, every worldly possession, attachment, and aversion, and begin to meditate upon the nature of the Self, the cycle of existence which is full of misery, and the way to salvation. This may be done once, twice, or thrice a day, morning, noon, and evening, according to convenience, the duration being gradually increased. This gives him mental strength and peace. Physical discipline is then secured by the next two vows, *poṣadhopavāsa* and *bhogopabhogaparimāṇa*. On four days in a month, that is, once a week, he should observe complete fast, abstaining from all kinds of food and drink, and should pass his day in a temple reading scriptures or contemplating upon the Self. This is called *poṣadhopavāsa*. For each day, he should fix his programme of food and comforts in a restrictive manner, both as regards quantity and quality, and should strictly adhere to the same. This is known as *bhogopabhogaparimāṇa*. The last of the instructive vows is *atithi-saṁvibhāga*, according to which he should, each day, feed, out of what is cooked for himself, such righteous and holy persons as may turn up at his house at the proper time.

These five *aṇuvratas*, three *guṇavratas*, and four *śikṣāvratas*, in all twelve, constitute the chief vows of a householder, and a proper observance of them means right conduct (*samyak-cāritra*). But right conduct has to be preceded by right faith (*samyak-darśana*) and right knowledge (*samyak-jñāna*). A deep devotion to those who have attained perfection, or are on

the way to it, as well as to their teachings, constitutes right faith. In order to keep this faith ever enkindled in his heart, a householder should perform the daily worship of the gods, scriptures, and teachers. The sages who become perfect in knowledge and are on the verge of their salvation, teaching humanity its duties, are the real gods deserving worship. Twenty-four such *arhats* or *tīrthaṅkaras*, as they are called, are recognized, with Ṛṣabhadeva as the first and Pārśvanātha and Mahāvīra or Vardhamāna as the last two. Books embodying their teachings and ascetics following the rules of conduct laid down therein are the true worshipful scriptures and teachers. Right knowledge is the knowledge of the seven *tattvas* as propounded by the Tīrthaṅkaras and explained above. Right faith, right knowledge, and right conduct together constitute the way to salvation.

For the convenience of practice, the whole course of right conduct of a householder is divided into eleven stages (*pratimā*). Right faith, without falling into pride or superstitious beliefs and unholy worship, is the first stage (*darśana*). Next comes the observance of the aforesaid twelve vows in a general way (*vrata*). At the third stage, he devotes himself specially to self-contemplation thrice a day (*sāmāyika*). Carrying out the programme of the weekly fasts constitutes the fourth stage (*poṣadhopavāsa*). At the fifth stage, special attention is paid to avoid loss of life by renouncing green vegetables (*sacitta-tyāga*). Meals at night are completely given up at the sixth (*rātribhojana-tyāga*); strict celibacy is observed at the seventh (*brahmacarya*); household affairs and occupations are given up at the eighth (*ārambha-tyāga*); claims to properties in his own name are renounced at the ninth (*parigraha-tyāga*); giving consent or advice in worldly affairs is abandoned at the tenth (*anumati-tyāga*); and at the eleventh stage, he does not even take food specially cooked for himself (*uddiṣṭa-tyāga*). At this stage, he is ripe for launching upon the much more arduous career of a monk.

ETHICAL CODE FOR A MONK

A monk completely abandons all worldly possessions and ceases to dwell under a roof. As aids in the observance of his vows, he can keep with him a jug for holding pure water, a bunch of peacock feathers for driving away insects from wherever he may have an occasion to sit, and some religious books for study. In addition to these, the Śvetāmbara section of the Jains also allows some clothes to be worn by the monk, but the Digambara section prohibits this absolutely and regards the abandonment of all clothing as the *sine qua non* of the monastic Order. He disciplines his body and mind by practising twenty-two endurances (*parīṣaha*), namely, hunger, thirst, cold, heat, mosquito-bite, nudity, disgust, sex-feeling,

movement, sitting, lying, anger, beating, begging, non-acquisition, disease, straw-prick, dirt, honour, wisdom, ignorance, and lack of insight.

The five vows of non-injury to living beings, truthfulness, non-stealing, celibacy, and poverty are observed by him in their strictest form as *mahāvratas*, and not as *aṇuvratas* like the householders. He must under no circumstances whatsoever injure any living being, in thought, word, or deed, not even to save his life. The other four vows are observed with similar strictness without the least concession. For this purpose, he observes certain forms of carefulness (*samiti*). He must, for example, walk only by day taking care that he kills no being (*īryā-samiti*), and in his speech strictly avoid censure of others, self-praise, and talk about women, kings, thieves, or eatables. He should speak only beneficial words (*bhāṣā-samiti*). He should be satisfied with whatever food is offered to him, but he should see that what he eats is free from all impurity (*eṣaṇā-samiti*). He must also be very careful in placing and taking up his things (*ādāna-nikṣepaṇa-samiti*) as well as in answering calls of nature and disposing of refuse (*pratisthāpanika-* or *utsarga-samiti*), so as to exclude the possibility of loss of life by these operations.

He must so train himself as not to be affected or moved by the objects of the senses. A beautiful or an ugly sight, a charming note or a jarring sound, a fragrant or foul smell, a flavoury or a tasteless dish, and a tender or a rough touch should arouse in him no feelings of joy or hatred, attraction or repulsion. He should devote himself to deep meditation, eulogistic recitations of the twenty-four Tīrthaṅkaras and homage to them, confession of sins unwittingly committed and fresh determination to be more cautious and careful, and detachment of thought from the body. All these come under the twenty-eight fundamental qualities (*mūlaguṇa*) of an ascetic, by cultivating which no fresh inflow of *karmas* takes place in his soul. The existing *karmas* may then be exhausted by allowing them no opportunity to bear fruit. This is done by means of various practices, the chief of which is meditation. Withdrawing his senses from all objects, concentrating his mind on the Self, he should reflect upon the nature of reality as propounded under the seven *tattvas*, the qualities of the *arhats* and the *siddhas*, and the way to perfection. He should so absorb himself in these thoughts that hunger or thirst, cold or heat, praise or censure, and worship or blows may have no effect on him. Forgiveness to all creatures, complete absence of self-conceit, deceitfulness, or greed, perfect honesty, complete self-control, and chastity should characterize all his actions, utterances, and thoughts. He should be friendly towards all, pleased with the learned, compassionate and helpful to the suffering, and indifferent towards those who might be uncharitably inclined towards him. The one aim before an ascetic should

be to perfect himself in self-control and knowledge and be a light to himself and others.

There are fourteen stages of spiritual advancement (*guṇa-sthānas*). At the first stage, an aspirant is steeped in falsehood (*mithyātva*). If he is lacking in the right belief, he is at the second stage (*sāsādana*). There may be a mixture of rightness and falsehood in his mental attitude (*miśra*). Right belief (*samyag-darśana*) constitutes the fourth stage. Partial moulding of conduct according to the right faith is the fifth stage (*deśa-virata*). The ascetic begins activities at the sixth stage with some slackness in conduct and thought (*pramatta-virata*). This slackness is got rid of at the seventh stage (*apramatta*). The passions are controlled and extraordinary spiritual powers are developed at the eighth (*apūrva-karaṇa*). A special purity of the mind which allows no swerving is achieved at the ninth (*anivṛtti-karaṇa*). Very little of self-interest remains at the tenth (*sūkṣma-sāṁparāya*). All delusion subsides at the eleventh (*upaśānta-moha*), and it ceases altogether at the twelfth (*kṣīṇa-moha*). At the thirteenth, he shines forth perfect in knowledge with all the disabling kārmic influences destroyed: he is a *sayogi-kevalin*, an *arhat*, or a *tīrthaṅkara*. At the fourteenth and last of the *guṇa-sthānas*, the mortal coils lose their hold; he is an *ayogi-kevalin*: and, lo, in a moment, he becomes a *siddha*, free from *saṁsāra* for all times!

24

JAINISM: ITS PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS

THROUGHOUT Vedic literature we find two parallel currents of thought, opposed to each other, one enjoining animal sacrifice in the *yajñas* (sacrifices), and the other condemning it, the former being represented by the Brāhmaṇas of the Kuru-Pañcāla country in the west, and the latter by the Kṣatriyas of the eastern countries consisting of Kāśī, Kosala, Videha, and Magadha. It is also noteworthy that in these areas the Kṣatriyas were at the head of society, whereas in the Kuru-Pañcāla country, the Brāhmaṇas were the leaders. And again, in the eastern countries, instead of pure Sanskrit, Prakrits were prevalent, which were the canonical language of Jainism and Buddhism. Further, the *Ātma-vidyā* of the Upaniṣads is found to be cultivated by the Kṣatriyas of these eastern countries, as against the sacrificial religion and the adoration of the gods in the Kuru-Pañcāla country. As we find these features in Jainism, and in Buddhism which later arose in this very area, we may conclude that Jainism was prevalent in the eastern countries, and is as old as the Vedas. It is also held by the Jains that the Vedas, at least the portions that are now lost, advocated *ahiṁsā*, and the cleavage arose between the two schools when there was difference of opinion in the interpretation of the Vedas, as illustrated in the story of King Vasu found in Jaina literature as well as in the *Mahābhārata*.

THE PLACE OF JAINA DARŚANAS AMONG THE INDIAN DARŚANAS

It is the usual practice of Hindu philosophers to classify *darśanas* (philosophies) into two groups—Vedic and non-Vedic, otherwise known as *āstika darśanas* and *nāstika darśanas*. Under the former heading, it is usual to include Sāṁkhya and Yoga, Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika, Mīmāṁsā and Vedānta. Under the latter come the Jaina, Bauddha, and Cārvāka. It is but a truism to say that the Jaina *darśana* is outside the Vedic fold. But, on this score, it is misleading to call it a *nāstika darśana* (for the term '*nāstika*' is also interpreted to mean those who do not believe in any higher reality than this sense-perceived world), which becomes still more misleading when translated into English as 'an atheistic school'.

The term 'atheism' has a definite and well-recognized significance. It is associated with the Semitic conception of a Creator. One who does not accept such a Creator and His created activity is generally signified by the term 'atheist'. But in the case of Indian *darśanas*, there is no such

implication anywhere. In this respect they are at one with the Jains. The Sāṁkhya school openly rejects the creation theory and the doctrine of the Creator of the universe. The Yoga school, which has gained the name 'Seśvara Sāṁkhya', i.e. Sāṁkhya with an Iśvara, as contrasted with the 'Nirīśvara Sāṁkhya' of Kapila, is equally opposed to Sṛṣṭivāda or the creation theory, and holds up Iśvara merely as an ideal to be realized by man. Besides this function, Iśvara in the Yoga system has no resemblance to Jahveh, the Creator in the Hebrew religion. In the case of the Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika systems, writers very often speak of an Iśvara, with the attributes of *sṛṣṭi* (creation) and *saṁhāra* (dissolution), but the word '*sṛṣṭi*' here refers only to the building up of the cosmos out of ultimate and eternal elements, the atoms of the physical world and the Jīvas of the living world. In the case of the Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā, we do not find any Creator at all. The ultimate factor in evolution is recognized to be *karma.* Finally, in the Uttara-Mīmāṁsā, otherwise known as the Vedānta, there is no recognition of a creation theory at all. The concrete world is interpreted to be a manifestation of the ultimate Brahman.

When we compare these *darśanas* with Jaina *darśana,* we cannot detect any fundamental difference among them. The Jaina *darśana* is opposed to Sṛṣṭivāda, but it speaks of a Paramātman or Sarvajña, the omniscient Being, who serves as an ideal to be aimed at by man. It resembles the Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā in emphasizing the potency of *karma* as the basic principle of *saṁsāra* (relative world), but differs from it in maintaining the doctrine of Sarvajña. It resembles Vedānta in holding that every individual Jīva is potentially a Paramātman. As the commentator Guṇaratna of Haribhadra Sūri's *Ṣaḍdarśana-samuccaya* maintains, the only significance we can attach to the word '*āstika*' is a belief in the reality of Ātman, of *saṁsāra* (cycle of births and deaths), and of *mokṣa* (salvation) and the path to realize it (*mokṣa-mārga*). According to this interpretation, the *darśana* that could be truly called *nāstika* is the Cārvāka, and partially that school of Buddhism which emphasizes Anātmavāda (the doctrine that there is no Ātman or Self).

PAÑCA-PARAMEṢṬHINS

Thus, according to Jainism, there is no creation of the world, nor is there any Creator necessary to explain the nature of the world. After completely conquering all the *karmas* and destroying all the shackles of sāṁsāric (worldly) consequences, the Self exists in its supreme purity as *siddha-parameṣṭhin,* endowed with the qualities of infinite perception, infinite knowledge, infinite bliss, and infinite power. This *parameṣṭhin* with infinite qualities is the conqueror of *saṁsāra,* is the *jina,* and he serves

as the ideal to be aimed at by all persons who desire to escape from the cycle of births and deaths characteristic of *saṁsāra.*

Besides the *siddha-parameṣṭhin,* Jainism recognizes the *arhat-parameṣṭhin,* who represents a lower stage in liberation than the *siddha-parameṣṭhin.* Nevertheless, in some respects, the stage of *arhat* should be considered important from the human point of view, because it is in this stage of Arhathood that the *arhat* or *tīrthaṅkara* reveals, for the benefit of the world, the path to salvation and all the various Āgamas or scriptures describing such a path.

According to Jaina tradition, the scriptures embodying the knowledge of the ultimate Reality are periodically revealed for the benefit of mankind by the *tīrthaṅkaras* or the *arhats,* whose status corresponds to that of the founders of various other religions, or to the conception of the *avatāras.* Born with the privilege of becoming the lord of religion, through the adoption of *yoga* practice or *tapas,* after destroying the most powerful of kārmic bondages, the *tīrthaṅkara* attains omniscience in this world. He becomes entirely free from the wants and desires characteristic of the flesh. Establishing his own Self in its purity, uncontaminated by the defects of the body which still clings to him, filled with universal love and mercy for all living beings, worshipped by the lords of the three worlds, the *tīrthaṅkara* spends some time in the world with the object of propounding the *dharma* for the benefit of the Jīvas that are still entangled in *saṁsāra.* After achieving his own object in life by the realization of his true Selfhood, and thus becoming endowed with knowledge, power, and bliss of infinite magnitude, the *arhat-* or *tīrthaṅkara-parameṣṭhin* wanders over the country propounding the *dharma* and defining the path of salvation, so that others may also have the benefit of liberation from *saṁsāra.*

There is the traditional belief that, for his convenience, Indra constructs an elaborate moving audience hall which serves both as a vehicle carrying the *tīrthaṅkara* from place to place and for accommodating the devout *bhaktas* (followers) eager to listen to the truth propounded by him. This is known as the *samavasaraṇa maṇḍapa.* Whenever this *maṇḍapa* appears in any particular locality carrying the *tīrthaṅkara,* there is a reign of universal peace and harmony. Even animals naturally antagonistic to one another exhibit a tendency towards peace and goodwill to one another. The *tīrthaṅkara,* who is omniscient (*sarvajña*) and is immersed in infinite bliss, is worshipped with one thousand and eight names, such as Sarveśvara, Sarvahita, Mahādeva, Mahā-Viṣṇu, Arhadeva, etc.

Such *tīrthaṅkaras* appear in the world in different cosmic periods, which, according to Jaina philosophy, consist of an age of evolution and growth, followed by an age of dissolution and decay. The former is called

utsarpiṇī and the latter *avasarpiṇī*, the two constituting the complete cosmic cycle of time. Each of these periods is subdivided into six parts, and the present world-period represents the period of decay or *avasarpiṇī*, of which the current division is the fifth time-period called *pañcama-kāla*. In the period immediately prior to this, the fourth period of *avasarpiṇī*, appeared all the twenty-four *tīrthaṅkaras* of the modern world-period. These are Ṛṣabha or Vṛṣabha or Ādi, Ajita, Sambhava, Abhinandana, Sumati, Padmaprabha, Supārśva, Candraprabha, Suvidhi or Puṣpadanta, Śītala, Śreyāṁsa or Śreyān, Vāsupūjya, Vimala, Ananta(jit), Dharma, Śānti, Kunthu, Ara, Malli, Suvrata or Munisuvrata, Nami, Nemi or Ariṣṭanemi, Pārśva, and Vardhamāna Mahāvīra. With Mahāvīra ends the line of the *tīrthaṅkaras* as also the fourth period of *avasarpiṇī*.

A *tīrthaṅkara* is associated with five kinds of festivals known as the *pañca-kalyāṇas*, in which the *devas* take part. The *pañca-kalyāṇas* are: (1) *svargāvataraṇa*, the descent of a *deva* to become a *tīrthaṅkara* ; (2) *mandarābhiṣeka* (or *janmābhiṣeka*), rejoicing at the birth of the *tīrthaṅkara* by performing an *abhiṣeka* (ablution) at the summit of Mandaragiri ; (3) *dīkṣā*, when the *tīrthaṅkara* renounces the kingdom and worldly pleasures in order to become a *yogin* ; (4) *kevalotpatti*, which represents the appearance of omniscient knowledge as the result of *tapas* and the destruction of *karmas*; and (5) *parinirvāṇa*, representing the complete destruction of all *karmas* and the attainment of salvation or the realization of *paramātma-svarūpa*.

Besides these two types of *parameṣṭhins*, *siddha* and *tīrthaṅkara*, Jainism recognizes three other kinds who also deserve reverence and worship from the devotees. These are the *ācārya-parameṣṭhin*, *upādhyāya-parameṣṭhin*, and *sādhu-parameṣṭhin*. They do not represent the stage of complete liberation from *saṁsāra*, but nevertheless represent important stages towards that goal. The *ācārya-parameṣṭhins* must be free from attachment to external things; must show general sympathy and love to all living beings; must be actuated by 'the three jewels' (*ratnatraya*), i.e. right belief, right knowledge, and right conduct; must be entirely free from the baser emotions, such as anger and ambition; must illustrate by their conduct the significance of the five great *vratas* (vows); must be able to exercise the authority of initiating into the *jina-dharma* all those that seek to be admitted; must possess undoubted knowledge as to the nature of Reality; must not be actuated by the desire for self-aggrandizement or self-praise; and must whole-heartedly devote themselves to the propagation of *dharma*.

Next in rank to the *ācārya-parameṣṭhin* comes the *upādhyāya-parameṣṭhin*, who has no authority to initiate people into the *jina-dharma*

or to organize the Jaina *saṅgha* (organization). His whole function is to popularize the *jina-dharma,* in order to help the souls entangled in *saṁsāra* to reach perfection. He educates and instructs the people.

Next in order are *sādhu-parameṣṭhins,* the great souls who do not have any definite function, either of authority or of instruction, but still illustrate through their conduct the path to salvation, so that others, following their example, may accept the *dharma* and adopt the path of self-discipline and self-realization.

These five constitute the *pañca-parameṣṭhins*—the five kinds of persons worshipped by the Jains as representing the ideal in life at the different stages of realization.

THE ĀGAMAS OR SCRIPTURES

The Āgamas or the scriptures of the Jains are revealed by the Sarvajña, or the omniscient Being. The Jaina scriptures should not be in conflict with the well-known *pramāṇas,* the criteria of correct knowledge. They must be capable of leading men towards higher goals, to *svarga* and *mokṣa,* must give correct information as to the nature of reality, and must describe the four *puruṣārthas* (ends of human life): *dharma* (religious merit), *artha* (wealth), *kāma* (enjoyment), and *mokṣa.* The Āgamas with such characteristics, revealed by the Sarvajña, have been handed down from generation to generation by a succession of teachers called *gaṇadharas,* beginning with Sudharman, the chief disciple of the Tīrthaṅkara Vardhamāna Mahāvīra. They are known by the following appellations: the Siddhānta, Paramāgama, Kṛtānta, Veda, Śruti, Śāstra, etc.

The Āgamas[1] are grouped under three classes: Aṅga, Pūrva, and Prakīrṇa. The first group, i.e. Aṅga, consists of twelve subclasses: *Ācāra, Sūtrakṛta, Sthāna, Samavāya, Vyākhyā-prajñapti* or *Bhagavatī, Jñātṛ-*

[1] In the matter of the religious scriptures, there is some difference of opinion between the two sects of the Jains—the Digambaras and Śvetāmbaras. About the time of the Maurya emperor Candragupta, on account of a terrible famine in North India, a large body of Jaina ascetics under the leadership of Bhadrabāhu, with his royal disciple Candragupta, who renounced his kingdom and joined the party, migrated to the South for the purpose of obtaining support and sustenance during the period of the famine. But a large section of the Jaina ascetics stayed behind in North India. When the body of ascetics who migrated to the South returned home to the North, after the famine conditions had been over, they found that their brethren who stayed at home had changed their habits very much. On account of this change of habits, there arose a cleavage between the two, which is supposed to be the origin of a schism within the community resulting in the two sections—the Śvetāmbaras and the Digambaras—, the former school associated with those that stayed at home and the latter championed by those who migrated towards the South. The books preserved by the northern group were not accepted as authoritative by the Digambaras, who maintained that the original texts revealed by the *tīrthaṅkara-parameṣṭhin* and preserved by the succession of teachers were lost completely, and what the Śvetāmbaras claimed as the authoritative texts were spurious substitutes for the lost originals. This controversy still persists between these two groups. Of course, this contention of the Digambaras is not accepted by the Śvetāmbaras, who claim that their texts are quite valid, inasmuch as they represent the originals.

dharmakathā, Upāsaka-daśāka, Antakṛd-daśāka, Anuttaraupapātika-daśāka, Praśna-vyākaraṇa, Vipāka-Sūtra, and *Dṛṣṭivāda.*[3]

The second group, i.e. Pūrva, consists of fourteen subclasses: *Utpāda, Agrāyaṇīya, Vīrya-pravāda, Asti-nāsti-pravāda, Jñāna-pravāda, Satya-pravāda, Ātma-pravāda, Karma-pravāda, Pratyākhyāna, Vidyānuvāda, Kalyāṇa, Prāṇavāya, Kriyā-viśāla,* and *Loka-bindu-sāra.*

The third group, i.e. Prakīrṇa, consists of sixteen subdivisions: *Sāmāyika, Caturviṁśati-stava, Vandanā, Pratikramaṇa, Vainayika, Kṛti-karma, Daśa-vaikālika, Anuttarādhyayana, Kalpya-vyavahāra, Kalpyākalpya, Mahākalpya, Puṇḍarīka, Mahāpuṇḍarīka, Padma, Mahāpadma,* and *Cinyaśītikā.*[4]

Besides the foregoing classification of Āgamas, there is another classification. According to this, the Āgamas are of four kinds: *Prathamānuyoga, Caraṇānuyoga, Kāraṇānuyoga,* and *Dravyānuyoga. Prathamānuyoga* contains the biographies of the *tīrthaṅkaras,* the emperors, and other great historical personages relating to India. Such a life-history of the great personages is represented by the *Mahāpurāṇa. Caraṇānuyoga* deals with the course of conduct prescribed for the householder as well as the homeless ascetic. *Kāraṇānuyoga* treats of the cosmos and the constituent elements which build up the cosmos. The fourth, *Dravyānuyoga,* is a metaphysical treatise describing the nature of life, matter, and other primary categories of reality.

I. JAINA METAPHYSICS

Metaphysics forms an important portion of Jaina sacred literature. The reality, according to Jaina philosophy, is uncreated and eternal. According to the *Tattvārthādhigama-Sūtra, 'Utpāda-vyaya-dhrauvya-lakṣaṇaṁ sat'*—reality is that which is characterized by origination, decay, and permanence, i.e. appearance and disappearance in the midst of permanence. The only parallel to this in western thought is the Hegelian doctrine of the dialectical nature of reality—the thesis and antithesis reconciled and held together by synthesis.

Every real object embodies in itself an affirmative and a negative aspect synthesized and held together by its own complex nature, quite analogous to the biological principle of metabolism comprehending and reconciling in itself the two opposite processes of katabolism and anabolism. It maintains its identity and permanence only through the continued process of

[3] About the time of the Conference at Pāṭaliputra, after the twelve years' famine, *Dṛṣṭivāda* was lost, and the Śvetāmbaras therefore recognized only eleven. But the Digambara tradition which is followed in South India recognizes all the twelve.

[4] For a different account and classification of the canonical works, see *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics,* VII. p. 467 (Jainism)—Ed.

change consisting of origin and decay—identity and permanence in the midst of variety and change.

Such ultimate reals are five in number: *jīva, pudgala, dharma, adharma,* and *ākāśa.* These are primary constituent elements of the cosmos, and are technically called *pañcāstikāya,* the five *astikāyas. Asti* implies existence, and *kāya,* volume. *Astikāya* therefore means a category which is capable of having spatial relations. Here spatial relation should be differentiated from volume associated with matter. Materiality or corporeality is a property which is peculiar to *pudgala* or matter. *Pudgala* alone is *mūrta* (corporeal), the others are *amūrta* (non-corporeal), though they are *astikāyas* having spatial relations. Of these, the first, *jīva astikāya,* relates to Jīvas or Ātmans or souls. It is the only *cetana* (conscious) category, the other four being *acetanas.* This *cetana* entity, Jīva, is entirely different from *pudgala* or matter, which represents the inorganic world. If *kāla* (time) is added to these five *astikāyas,* then we have the six *dravyas* (substances) of Jaina metaphysics. The time category is different in nature from the five *astikāyas.* Whereas the *astikāyas* are capable of being simultaneously associated with multiple spatial points or *pradeśas,* time can have only unilateral relation of moments, and hence cannot have simultaneous relations to a group of multiple points.

DRAVYA AND GUṆAS

Dravya is that which manifests itself through its own *guṇas* and *paryāyas*—qualities and modifications. The usual illustration given is gold with its qualities of yellowness, brilliance, malleability, etc. Its *paryāyas* or modifications are the various ornaments that can be made of it. One ornament may be destroyed and out of the gold another ornament may be made. The disappearance of one *paryāya* or mode and the appearance of another, while the substance remains permanent and constant, are the characteristics of every *dravya. Utpāda* and *vyaya,* appearance and disappearance, always refer to the changing modifications, while permanence always refers to the underlying substance. From the aspect of *paryāya,* a thing is subject to birth and decay. From the aspect of *dravya,* it is permanent. Therefore permanence and change refer to two different aspects—change from the aspect of modifications, and permanence from the aspect of the underlying substance.

Jaina metaphysics does not recognize *guṇas* without *dravyas* nor *dravyas* without *guṇas.* Qualities without a substratum and a substratum without qualities are both empty abstractions and hence unreal. The qualities constitute the expression of the substance, and the qualities of one cannot be transformed into the qualities of another. Thus substance

and qualities are identical, inasmuch as the latter exhibit the nature of the former. In spite of this identity between *dravya* and *guṇa,* they are distinct from each other. If there is no fundamental difference between substance and quality, *dravya* and *guṇa,* there will be no means of apprehending the nature of *dravya,* except through its manifestation. Hence the two must be kept separate in thought, though they cannot be separated in reality. *Dravya* and *guṇa,* substance and quality, may be said to be different from each other from one point of view and yet identical from another point of view. It is both *bheda* and *abheda,* different and yet identical. This *bheda-abheda* point of view is again peculiar to Jaina metaphysics.

In this respect, it is fundamentally distinct from the Vaiśeṣika point of view, which holds that *dravya* is a distinct *padārtha* from *guṇa,* and the two are brought together by a third principle called *samavāya.* Jīva is a distinct *dravya,* and knowledge, feeling, and conation, as properties of Jīva, exist independently of it, but the two are brought together by the intervention of *samavāya.* Jaina metaphysics completely rejects this view. *Jñāna* and other properties of the Jīva or soul are inseparable from its nature, and hence the presence of properties in the Jīva is not the result of a combination effected by a third principle. If knowledge, feeling, and conation, the properties of the soul, were considered to be existing independently of it, then the soul without these properties would cease to be a conscious principle, a *cetana dravya* (conscious entity), and hence would be indistinguishable from the *acetana dravya* (matter). The distinction between *cetana* and *acetana* among the reals will cease to have any meaning; similarly, properties such as *jñāna* and *sukha* or *duḥkha* (pleasure or pain), since they do not have any relation to a *cetana dravya,* will cease to be the properties of the *cetana* entity, and their association with the *dravya,* effected by a third principle, may be with matter, an *acetana dravya,* and not necessarily with a Jīva. Thus the absolute independence of *guṇa* and *guṇin,* quality and substratum, is rejected by Jaina metaphysics as an impossible doctrine. The Jīva, which is by nature a conscious or *cetana* principle, is fundamentally different from material substance; and yet in concrete life it is intimately in association with a body.

JIVA OR CETANA DRAVYA

The description of *jīva dravya* as a *cetana* entity is similar to the description of Ātman in the Upaniṣadic literature. Since its nature is *cetana,* or *citsvarūpa,* it has the essential characteristics of perception and knowledge. In itself, it is incapable of being measured by material units

or space units. In the concrete world, it is always found associated with a body as an organized being, and has all the characteristics of a living being associated with a body and other sense-organs.

The Jīva as an active agent figures as the operative cause of its own *karmas* and in turn enjoys the fruits of such *karmas*. Hence it is a knower (*jñātṛ*), an actor (*kartṛ*), and an enjoyer (*bhoktṛ*). It has knowledge of objects; it acts either to possess them or to avoid them; and, as a result of its action, is able to enjoy the fruits thereof. Thus it is endowed with the triple nature of consciousness—conation, cognition, and affection or emotion. In this respect, the Jaina conception of Jīvātman is wholly different from the other views. For example, the Sāṁkhya conception of Puruṣa makes it the knower and the enjoyer, but not the actor. Jaina metaphysics makes the Ātman active in itself, and what it enjoys as *bhoktṛ* is merely the fruit of its own action which it performs as *kartṛ*.

CLASSES OF JIVAS

Throughout the living kingdom, in the botanical and zoological world, life is found in association with matter. The association of Jīva with body, its *śarīra*, is an important characteristic of the concrete living world. Jīva in association with its body is quite different from Jīva in its pure state. The latter is called the pure Ātman and the former *saṁsārī jīva*. This *saṁsārī jīva*, in association with its appropriate body, is said to be of different grades of existence. Jīvas, in the biological kingdom, are classified according to their development. Jaina philosophy divides the Jīvas in the world according to the principle of the development of the sense-organs. The lowest class of Jīvas consists of *ekendriya jīvas*, or Jīvas having only one sense-organ. Next higher to this are *dvīndriya jīvas*, or Jīvas having two sense-organs. Then higher above, we have Jīvas with three *indriyas*. Then there are Jīvas with four *indriyas*, then *pañcendriya jīvas* or Jīvas with five sense-organs, and lastly, *samanaska*, i.e., *pañcendriya jīvas* with *manas* (mind). The first class refers to the vegetable kingdom which is considered to be a part of the living world. Trees and plants have all the properties of living organisms, such as assimilation, growth and decay, and reproduction. They are endowed with only one sense-organ—the awareness of touch. In addition to the recognition of the botanical world as a part of the biological world, the Jaina philosophy speaks of *sūkṣma ekendriya jīvas*, minute and microscopic organisms endowed with only one sense—the sense of touch. These generally exist in other bodies, and also in earth, water, air, and light, on account of which such Jīvas are called *pṛthvī-kāyika*, *ap-kāyika*, *vāyu-kāyika*, and *tejas-kāyika*. This doctrine of *sūkṣma ekendriya jīvas*, with their respective places of

existence, is entirely misunderstood by some scholars, who go to the extent of attributing to Jaina philosophy a primitive doctrine of animism that earth, water, air, etc. have their own souls.

Worms represent the second class of organisms with two senses—touch and taste. Ants represent the third class with touch, taste, and smell. Bees represent the fourth class with sight in addition to the three. Higher animals represent the fifth class having in addition the sense of hearing. Of course, man represents the highest of these classes, having mind in addition to the five senses.

SAṀSĀRA AND MOKṢA

Again, Jīvas are of four main groups according to the four *gatis* (states of existence): *devas* or divine beings, *naras* or human beings, *nārakas* or denizens of hell, and *tiryaks* or the lower animals and the plant world. These four beings constitute *saṁsāra*, which is the result of kārmic bondage, according to which a particular Jīva will be born in any one of the *gatis*. *Mokṣa* or salvation consists in escaping from the sāṁsāric cycle of births and deaths in any one of these four *gatis* and reaching that safe haven where there is no birth and death. The Jīva that reaches this stage beyond *saṁsāra* attains the goal and realizes the Truth. It is pure Jīva or Ātman, otherwise known as *siddha jīva*. As long as a Jīva is in *saṁsāra*, it is bound by kārmic shackles which lead to the building up of a body for it, and the purity of its nature and strength of knowledge have no chance of complete manifestation. Its knowledge is limited, and nature deformed, according as it is bound by various *karmas*. Since there is no scope for its pure nature to manifest itself, it mainly depends upon the sense-organs as to instruction and acquiring knowledge, and its life is mainly determined by its environment consisting of objects presented to the senses. Naturally, it is attracted by the pleasures derived from the sense objects and repulsed by contrary feelings. Till the proper time comes, when it is able to realize its heritage of nobility and purity, it remains immersed in these sense pleasures which only make it move from one birth to another, from one *gati* to another, in an unending series of births and deaths.

AJĪVA OR ACETANA DRAVYAS

The *dravyas* which belong to the non-living class, the *ajīva dravyas*, are: *pudgala, dharma, adharma, ākāśa*, and *kāla*—matter, the principle of motion, the principle of rest, space, and time. All these are *acetana* (insentient) *dravyas*. *Pudgala* or matter is *mūrta dravya*, the corporeal category which can be perceived by the senses. It is associated with sense properties such as colour, taste, and smell. These consist of ultimate entities called atoms

or *paramāṇus.* By the combination of these atoms, aggregates are formed which are called *skandha.* Thus the term '*skandha*' in Jaina metaphysics means quite a different thing from the Buddhistic *skandha.* These aggregates may range from the smallest molecule of two atoms to the most important and biggest aggregate or *mahā-skandha,* represented by the whole physical universe. Thus the constitution of the physical universe is entirely dependent upon the ultimate constituent elements, the *paramāṇus.* The *pañca-bhūtas* (five elements) of the other systems are but examples of these aggregates of atoms. The *paramāṇu* or the ultimate atom cannot be perceived by the ordinary senses, so also the minute aggregates or the *skandhas.*

The peculiar doctrine of the Jaina metaphysics is the doctrine of kārmic matter, *karma-prayoga pudgala*—subtle material aggregates which form the basis for the building up of the subtle body (*kārmaṇa śarīra*) which is associated with every Jīva till the time of its liberation or *mokṣa.* The gross organic body, which is born of the parents, nourished by food, and subject to disease, decay, and death, is known as *audarika śarīra*—the body which is given birth to and is cast away by the Jīva associated with it at the time of death. But the Jīva cannot so cast away the *kārmaṇa śarīra* during its existence in *saṁsāra.* It is inevitably associated with every *saṁsārī jīva* throughout its career in the cycle of births and deaths. In fact, it is this kārmic body that is responsible for the sāṁsāric changes of Ātman which is in itself a pure *cetana dravya.* Its intrinsic purity is thus lost or diminished, because of its association with this kārmic body built up by the psychic activities of the soul itself. Conscious activities such as desires and emotions, according as they are healthy or unhealthy, act as causal conditions for the building up of the kārmic body which then becomes the vehicle for good or evil, and in its turn affects the nature of the psychic experience. Thus the interdependence between Jīva and the kārmic body, acting as cause and effect, each in its turn, continues to keep up the show of the sāṁsāric drama. But this should not be interpreted as fatalism, because the Jīva has in its unfathomable being a mighty potency transcending the limitations imposed upon it by its association with its kārmic body. Each person has the power and possibility of becoming an architect of his own destiny.

Jīva and *pudgala,* soul and matter, thus constitute the main *dravyas.* All activities in the world are ultimately traceable to these two entities. Hence they are called active principles, *sakriya-dravyas*—*dravyas* which are capable of acting. The other *dravyas*—*dharma, adharma, ākāśa,* and *kāla* are called *niṣkriya-dravyas*—*dravyas* without intrinsic activities. Of these, *ākāśa* refers to space. Its only function is to accommodate the other *dravyas.*

Space, according to Jaina metaphysics, is infinite in extent. That portion of *ākāśa* which accommodates the concrete world with its *saṁsārī jīvas* and *pudgala* is called *loka-ākāśa*—space accommodating the world. The space beyond, where there is neither matter nor soul, is called *aloka-ākāśa*—the space beyond the world. Thus the physical universe is supposed to have a definite structure, within which are accommodated all the Jīvas and all the *pudgala skandhas* and *paramāṇus*. *Dharma* and *adharma*, the principle of motion and the principle of rest, are two categories peculiar to Jaina metaphysics, and not found in any other Indian system. The two pervade the whole of *loka-ākāśa*. They do not extend beyond it. Subtle and imperceptible in themselves, they are endowed with important properties of serving as conditions for motion or rest. Movement in the world is associated with either a Jīva or *pudgala*, these being *sakriya dravyas*. But while life and matter are both capable of moving of their own accord determined by appropriate operative causal conditions, their movement is dependent upon the presence of the non-operative principle called *dharma*. Remaining in itself non-operative, this *dharma dravya* serves as a condition for making movement possible ; and the illustration generally given is the presence of water for the movement of fish. When a fish swims, the movement is due to an operative cause present in itself. Nevertheless, swimming would be impossible without the presence of water.

Similarly, when a moving object, living or non-living, comes to rest, it is necessary to have the presence of an opposite principle. Such a principle, determining rest, is *adharma dravya*. This also is a non-operative condition of rest. A moving object coming to rest is the result of an operative condition present in itself. A bird must cease to beat its wings so that its flight may come to a stop. But the stopping of activity requires a further condition. A bird ceasing to fly must perch on the branch of a tree or on the ground. Just as the branch of a tree or the ground serves as a non-operative condition of rest, the presence of the *adharma* principle serves as a condition for the moving objects to come to rest.

Without these two principles of *dharma* and *adharma*, there would be no definite structure of the world. The cosmos would disintegrate into primordial atoms, which might spread throughout the whole of infinite space. There would be no distinction between *loka* and *aloka*, the world and the beyond. There would be no permanent constitution of the world. Without constancy in the structure of the world, there would be nothing left but chaos. Hence what sustains the world as world, and what prevents the disintegration of the world into a chaos, is the presence of these two principles.

The last *dravya* is *kāla* or time. In Jaina metaphysics, time is a

necessary category of existence. The whole world consisting of matter and soul is in a process of change, either evolution or involution. Changes involving growth and decay constitute the very nature of the concrete world. The process of change without time would be unintelligible and must be dismissed as illusory. Since the concrete world cannot be dismissed as illusory, the category of time must be postulated as a necessary condition of change. *Kāla dravya* consists of moments or *kāla-paramāṇus* which constitute a time series having only the relation of before and after. There can be no simultaneous moments in the time series. The *vyāvahārika* or conventional time is the time which we use in our social life, the durations being measured by the movements of the sun and moon. This is of different durations, according to different measures, and ranges from the shortest *nimiṣa* to the longest *yuga*.

KĀRMIC BODY

We have noticed already that throughout its sāṁsāric life the Jīva is associated with a kārmic body, which forms the nucleus around which the grosser bodies are built up. According to this conception, the building up of the kārmic body forms the foundation for life in *saṁsāra* and the disintegration of the kārmic body constitutes the final liberation of the Jīva. The process of building up of the kārmic body and the plan of breaking it up are important aspects of metaphysical truth. *Jīva* and *ajīva*, the primary entities, are brought together to build up the body appropriate to each Jīva in the following process: *Āsrava*, which means 'flowing in', of kārmic molecules that are attracted by a Jīva, according to its characteristic psychic experience, is the main basis of the building up of the kārmic body, which, like the cocoon of a silkworm, surrounds the Jīva and acts as an impediment against the free manifestation of its intrinsic qualities. *Āsrava* leads to the next stage *bandha*, when the kārmic matter gets settled, or fixed up, in the kārmic body. This *karma*-bondage is of various intensity and duration. So long as the Jīva is not alive to its own intrinsic properties, and so long as it identifies itself with objects alien to itself, the building up of the kārmic cocoon goes on interminably. But when the Jīva realizes its nature as distinct from the material world, it endeavours to extricate itself from the trammels of *saṁsāra*, the root cause of which is the kārmic body.

The first step in extricating oneself from the shackles is called *saṁvara*, putting a stop to the inflow of kārmic matter. This is done by developing an appropriate mental attitude characterized by freedom from the attractions of sense objects and concentration upon one's own nature. In other words, yogic meditation or *tapas* is the necessary condition for preventing the flowing in of fresh kārmic matter. When this is achieved, the *yogin*

turns his attention to the kārmic deposits already present in his kārmic body. By concentrated attention and endeavour to realize one's own true nature through *tapas*, the bondage of already deposited kārmic matter is loosened and finally shaken off. This process by which the kārmic body gradually gets disintegrated by the attack on its intensity and duration is technically called *nirjarā*. When the *āsrava* of new kārmic matter is shut out by *saṁvara*, and the old kārmic matter, already present, crumbles and disintegrates through *nirjarā*, the kārmic body gradually gets attenuated and finally disappears. Side by side, the intrinsic qualities of the Ātman get expressed more and more, till it shines in full luminosity, in infinite greatness and infinite glory, which state represents final liberation or *mokṣa*. Then the sāṁsāric Jīva, by the process of destroying all the *karmas*, becomes Paramātman, the pure soul with infinite knowledge, power, and bliss. These stages represent critical periods in the life-history of the soul.

DIFFERENT CLASSIFICATIONS OF CATEGORIES

Technically, *āsrava*, *bandha*, *saṁvara*, *nirjarā*, and *mokṣa*, together with the primary entities, *jīva* and *ajīva*, constitute the seven *tattvas* (principles). If we add the two mental attainments, *puṇya* and *pāpa* (virtue and vice), to these, we get the nine *padārthas* (categories). Thus we have in Jaina metaphysics the five *astikāyas*, the six *dravyas*, the seven *tattvas*, and the nine *padārthas*, classified from different standpoints.

II. JAINA LOGIC AND THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

We have already seen that, in Jaina metaphysics, *jñāna* is an intrinsic property of the Jīva, and that it gets clouded in the state of *saṁsāra* by the kārmic body. As such the process of knowing must be interpreted to be the process of the manifestation of the intrinsic nature of the Jīva. *Jñāna* or knowledge is of five different kinds according to the stages of the spiritual development of the soul, viz. *mati*, *śruta*, *avadhi*, *manaḥ-paryāya*, and *kevala*. *Mati jñāna* refers to the ordinary process of sense experience, which is generally conditioned by perception through the sense-organs and the inferential knowledge based thereon. *Śruta jñāna* is the knowledge revealed by the scripture, the scripture itself being revealed to the world by the Sarvajña. *Avadhi jñāna* corresponds to what is known as clairvoyance. It is a kind of extra-sensory perception, not ordinarily available to all persons, though it is latent in everyone. Through the instrument of extra-sensory perception, one may actually see events taking place in a distant land or at a distant time. *Manaḥ-paryāya jñāna* refers to the knowledge of thoughts in other minds. It has direct access to the mind of other persons, and this capacity arises only as a result of *yoga* or *tapas*. *Kevala jñāna* refers to the

infinite knowledge which the soul attains as the result of complete liberation or *mokṣa*. These are the five kinds of *jñāna* which constitute the *pramāṇas* (instruments of knowledge). Of these, the first two are described as *parokṣa jñāna*—knowledge derived through an intervening medium. The other three are called *pratyakṣa jñāna*—knowledge derived through direct perception by the soul without any intervening medium.

It is the function of these *pramāṇas* to reveal the nature of objects in reality. The external world revealed through these *pramāṇas* consists of real objects, and hence should not be dismissed as illusory. In this respect, the Jaina theory of knowledge rejects the theory of Māyā of Advaitism, as well as the Buddhistic doctrine of illusoriness of the objective world. The function of *jñāna* is merely to reveal, on the one hand, the objective reality which is already existing, and also to reveal itself, on the other hand. Knowledge therefore is like a lamp, which, on account of its luminosity, reveals other objects as well as itself. The external objects so known are independent, inasmuch as they exist by themselves, and yet are related to knowledge as they are revealed by it. Similarly, the soul is both the subject and the object of knowledge in one. Inner experience reveals this nature of the soul, which is a *cetana* (conscious) entity.

The logical doctrine of Jaina philosophy forms the most important aspect of that school. The fundamental principle of this logical doctrine implies the possibility of a positive and negative predication about the same thing. This doctrine is generally referred to as *asti-nāsti*, is and is not. According to Jaina logic, affirmative predication about a thing depends upon four conditions—*svadravya, svakṣetra, svakāla,* and *svabhāva,* i.e. its own substance, its own locality, its own time or duration, and its own nature or modification. Correspondingly, the negative predication about the same thing is conditioned by the four things of an opposite nature—*paradravya, parakṣetra, parakāla,* and *parabhāva,* i.e. other substance, other locality, other time, and other nature. This ornament is made of gold, and it is not made of any other metal—are two obvious predications about the same gold ornament, the affirmation (*asti*) from the point of view of itself (*svadravya*) and the negation (*nāsti*) from the point of view of other substances (*paradravya*). Similarly, it may be said, Socrates was born in Athens, and he was not born in Rome—affirmative predication from *svakṣetra* and negative predication from *parakṣetra* point of view, both referring to the same individual. Likewise, we may affirm the historical period of an individual when we refer to his proper time in history (*svakāla*), and deny his relationship to any other period of time (*parakāla*). Tennyson lived in the Victorian age, and he did not live in the Elizabethan period. In the

same way, the last condition, *bhāva* or mode may be explained. Charles I died on the scaffold, and he did not die in his bed.

From these examples, it is quite obvious that both affirmative and negative predications are possible about the same thing from different points of view. From the same point of view, certainly it would be absurd to talk of affirmation and negation. The affirmative predication is conditioned by one aspect and the negative predication is conditioned by another. It is this difference of aspect that makes the *asti-nāsti* doctrine quite reasonable and enables us to have an affirmative and negative predication about the same object of reality. It may be urged that both *asti* and *nāsti*, affirmation and negation, being applicable to the same thing, the doctrine has to apply even to non-existent things such as the sky-flower and rabbit's horns, and that they too exist in some way, since what can accommodate the negative predication that it is not must also accommodate the positive predication that it is. The reply is that the *asti-nāsti* doctrine is applicable only to existing reals. It is only in the case of an existing reality that one can talk of *svadravya* and *paradravya*, *svakṣetra* and *parakṣetra*, etc. But in the case of a non-existing thing, one cannot apply these different points of view, and hence the doctrine is not applicable to absolute nonentities, but only to the reals.

Based upon this principle is the doctrine of *saptabhaṅgī*, the seven modes of predication. In order to speak of something in relation to its own substance or locality, time or mode, affirmation or *aṣti* is needed, while in relation to another substance or locality, time or mode, negation or *nāsti* is to be used. If both the aspects are to be spoken of, then both *asti* and *nāsti* are to be used, but one after another. Again, if both the aspects, affirmative and negative, in the same predication, are to be expressed, it becomes inexpressible by language—it is *avaktavya*. These are the four initial modes of predication in the group of *saptabhaṅgī*. By attaching the fourth term '*avaktavya*' to each of the first three, we arrive at the seven modes of predication: *asti, nāsti, asti-nāsti, avaktavya, asti-avaktavya, nāsti-avaktavya*, and *asti-nāsti-avaktavya*. These are the only seven possible modes of predication that we can have.

Is it possible to make the predication in each case in an absolute sense? Jaina logic does not recognize any such absolute predication. The nature of reality does not admit of it. Any real substance, since it embodies in itself the qualities as well as its modifications, must be described as something permanent in the midst of change, an identity in the midst of difference. One cannot describe a thing as absolutely unchanging permanence, or absolute change without permanence. Similarly, one cannot assert that the qualities are absolutely distinct from the thing, nor

that they are absolutely identical, since reality is by nature an identity in the midst of diversity, unity in the midst of multiplicity, permanence in the midst of change. Since reality, while maintaining its identical nature, expresses itself through multiple forms, it is *anaikāntātmaka*. A true apprehension of its nature must recognize this aspect of reality and hence should reject any type of absolute predication. It is because of this that Jaina *darśana* is called Anekāntavāda, as opposed to other *darśanas* which are Ekāntavāda. Since absolute predication is impossible, Jaina logic recognized only relative predication. Thus the term '*syāt*', which literally means 'perhaps', is prefixed to the predication, and it implies 'from one point of view'. It is added on to the seven modes of predication referred to in the doctrine of *saptabhaṅgī*, viz. *syādasti*, *syānnāsti*, and so on. This doctrine is therefore called by the names Saptabhaṅgī and Syādvāda.

III. JAINA ETHICS

The most important teaching of Jainism is Mokṣa-mārga (path to salvation). *Samyak darśana* (right faith), *samyak jñāna* (right knowledge), and *samyak cāritra* (right conduct), known as *ratnatraya* (the three jewels), together constitute the path to salvation.[3] They are wholly different from the Bhakti-mārga of the Bhāgavatas, Jñāna-mārga of the Vedāntins, and Karma-mārga of the Mīmāṁsakas. Unlike these religious schools, which lay all the emphasis either on *bhakti*, or *jñāna*, or *karma*, as means of salvation, Jainism holds that all the three must co-exist in a person, if he is to walk along the path of salvation. The Jaina commentators make the meaning quite clear by bringing in the analogy of medicine as a curative of some malady. Faith in its efficacy, knowledge of its use, and actual taking of the medicine—all these three must be present if a cure is to be effected. In the same way, the universal malady of sāṁsāric misery, which every soul is suffering from, can be cured by this triple panacea, the *ratnatraya*, when accepted as a mixture of the three principles of right faith, right knowledge, and right conduct. If any one element is missing, the other two, though each is valuable in itself, would be useless.

There are two courses of moral discipline or conduct according to Jaina ethics, one prescribed for the householder and the other for the homeless *sannyāsin*. In both cases, the code of morals is based upon the doctrine of *ahiṁsā*. The path of righteousness or *dharma* consists of the *ratnatraya*. *Dharma* would be incomplete if any one of these is wanting.

Of these three, the first, *samyak darśana* or right faith, is the basis of conduct and the important starting point in the religious life of a Jain. In

[3] *Samyag-darśana-jñāna-cāritrāṇi mokṣa-mārgāḥ* (*Tattvārthādhigama-Sūtra* of Umāsvāmin. The Central Jaina Publishing House, Arrah).

order to possess an unwavering faith, the Jaina householder is expected to get rid of the three types of superstitious ignorance and the eight kinds of haughtiness or arrogance. The three types of superstitious ignorance are the three *mūḍhas*—*loka-mūḍha, deva-mūḍha,* and *pāṣaṇḍi-mūḍha*. The first refers to the general superstition among people that by bathing in the so-called sacred rivers, or climbing up the hills, or walking through fire one acquires sanctity. The second refers to the belief of the people in the powers of gods and goddesses who are endowed with human qualities and human emotions, and to the propitiation of such gods and goddesses with the object of securing certain selfish ends. The third refers to devotion to certain false ascetics and acceptance of their teaching as gospel truth. Freedom from these three types of superstition is the primary condition of right faith. One who has the right faith must be free from the eight types of arrogance, for humility is a necessary condition for entering the kingdom of God. These eight are: arrogance of (1) the possession of intelligence; (2) the ability to conduct a grand type of temple worship; (3) noble family; (4) caste; (5) physical or mental strength; (6) magical powers; (7) *tapas* or *yoga*; and (8) the beauty of one's person.

The householder, thus equipped with right faith and right knowledge, must observe the five *vratas* or abstinences: *ahiṁsā, satya, asteya, brahmacarya,* and *aparigraha,* i.e. he must be free from cruelty, untruth, theft, unchastity, and avarice and unnecessary luxury. They are called *aṇuvratas,* the minor code of morals, when they are of limited application, and when they are applied without limitation, they become *mahāvratas,* the major code of morals, which are prescribed for the *yatis* or homeless ascetics. Every householder is expected to practise these five *vratas* according to his capacity. He has to pass through eleven stages or grades of a householder's life before he can enter the life of an ascetic.

The first *vrata, ahiṁsā,* means not injuring or hurting in any way any living being, an animal or even an insect, either by thought, word, or deed. It includes forbearing from binding them cruelly with ropes, thus preventing free movement, compelling them to carry burdens beyond their capacity, and not feeding them properly. It is not enough if he does not himself directly injure; he should neither cause injury through an agent, nor indirectly approve of the conduct of others when they indulge in such an act of cruelty. The second *vrata,* not to utter falsehood, is quite obvious. But it is interesting to note that even speaking truth which results in injury to others should be avoided. Thus it is clear that this principle is subordinated to the principle of *ahiṁsā,* which is the primary principle. This second *vrata* of *satya* includes refraining from teaching false doctrines with the object of misleading people; openly proclaiming from sheer wantonness

certain secrets such as those pertaining to the private life of people; scandal-mongering out of envy; sending anonymous letters containing mischievous insinuations; and suppressing the truth for the purpose of deceiving others. The third vow, *asteya* or non-stealing, has to be interpreted in the same comprehensive manner. A thing may be left by one due to forgetfulness; it may accidentally fall on the road. Such things belonging to others should not be taken possession of, for it may amount to stealing others' property. This principle also forbids indirect stealing in five different ways: instigating a person to go and steal in somebody's house, receiving stolen property, accompanying a victorious army in a military campaign with the object of looting the enemy's town, using fraudulent weights and measures, and adulterating things in selling them. The fourth principle, *brahmacarya*, refers to chastity or sex-purity in thought, word, and deed. The last vow, *aparigraha*, refers to limiting one's attachment to wealth and other worldly possessions—*parimita parigraha*. Inordinate longing for worldly goods will never result in contentment and happiness. It prevents spiritual harmony and peace in life. Hence even a householder has to reduce his wants and limit his desires, if he is to pursue his spiritual career and not be altogether lost in the world.

THE STATE OF THE HOMELESS

The *pañca aṇuvratas* are but the probation for the *pañca mahāvratas*. The discipline for the householder is specially intended to liberate him from the domestic ties which bind him to his wife and children, to his land and wealth. After completing this period of probation, the householder evidently is expected to enter into a wider realm of activity as an ascetic *yogin*. His love and sympathy, liberated from the sphere of domestic environment, will thereafter become available for the whole living creation. He quits the house to make the whole realm of nature his abode. He has no roof to live under except the star-bespangled canopy of the heavens. The *yogin* has to observe certain principles and adopt certain courses of conduct appropriate to his new surroundings. Since he has no need to associate himself with the ordinary social occupations, he limits his words and thoughts and refrains from indulging in useless and unnecessary activities. An ordinary person is generally a slave of his emotions; and his behaviour becomes characterized by harshness of speech, hastiness of movement, and general excitement. But in the case of the *yogin*, who has conquered such emotions through *dhyāna* (meditation), gentleness of behaviour comes naturally. His words are soft and soothing; the movements of his limbs are gentle and peaceful. In his presence, timid birds and animals will muster courage, and even wild animals will lose their ferocity.

Thus equipped with an internal peace and harmony, the *yogin* carries about him a spirit full of melody. His whole discipline aims at the conquest of the environment. His pride consists in being unshaken by its changes. His thoughts are fixed on higher and nobler things. The body which may be a source of inconvenience and trouble to the ordinary man ceases to be such in the case of a *yogin*. For, in his case, the body derives its strength and vitality from the inner strength and vitality of the Spirit. To one who carries in himself the universal panacea, there can be neither disease nor decay. This conquest of the environment, including his own body, carries him through the threshold of a newer world, where he enjoys a happiness far surpassing the pleasures of the senses, and he secures the peace that passeth understanding. The ordinary conventions which are made so much of by the man of the world are completely discarded by the superman, the *yogin*. Hence his words and actions become unintelligible to the people at large. He has secured the citizenship of the world of reality, whereas they are still living in the realm of shadows.

MESSAGE OF JAINISM

The pleasures of a *deva*, however great they be, must end some day. Even Devendra, the king of the gods, with all his greatness, can never enter the kingdom of God, if by the latter is meant that spiritual liberation implied by the term *mokṣa*. He must become a man before he can think of Heaven. For man forms the 'way in' for that paradise wherein is situated the temple of spiritual freedom. This embodies an important truth, viz. that man's heritage as man is far superior to any other riches in the world. It is this wonderful spiritual heritage of man that Naciketas would have from the lord of Death, in preference to the overlordship of the three worlds offered to him. It is this heritage again that Maitreyī preferred to all the accumulated wealth which was offered by her husband, Yājñavalkya. Again, it is to inherit this Kingdom that prince Siddhārtha cast away his father's kingdom as worthless and put on the mendicant's robe, in preference to the royal crown. This is the message of Jainism to mankind. 'Be a man first and last, for the Kingdom of God belongs to the son of Man'. It is this same truth that is proclaimed in unmistakable terms by the Upaniṣadic text *'Tat tvam asi'* (Thou art That).

25

SOME FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF JAINISM

MANY religious and philosophical movements contributed their different hues to the multi-coloured canvas of the ancient culture of India. Of these, the religious and philosophical system, at present known as Jainism, was, in the time of Pārśvanātha or, more accurately, of Mahāvīra, designated Nirgranthism (Niggaṇṭha Dhamma), though it was known by the general name Śramaṇism as well, a term which was applied to all non-Brāhmaṇical sects. It was known as Nirgranthism, because it laid supreme stress on non-possession and on renunciation of the house (*agāra* or *gṛha*), which was considered a knot (*grantha*). It also held that the conquest of the evil tendencies of attachment and hatred was the real end, and that the act of non-violence or austerity or renunciation which fails to achieve this end was spiritually futile. The promulgators of this ideal came to be regarded as *jinas* (victors), and their religion came to be known as Jainism. Over and above the general characteristics of Śramaṇism, Nirgranthism or Jainism has some specific characteristics, ethical and philosophical, based on equality and non-violence.

EMPHASIS ON SĀMĀIYA OR EQUALITY

Jainism lays great stress upon the attitude of equality. It has identified this attitude with the famous Brāhmaṇic conception of Brahman, and has designated the whole religious conduct and philosophical thought that helps the development of the attitude of equality as *bambhacera* (*brahmacarya*), even as Buddhism has designated the principles of goodwill (*maitrī*) and the like as *brahmavihāra*. Further, just like the *Dhammapada*[1] and the *Mahābhārata*,[2] the Jaina texts[3] identify a Śramaṇa, who embodies equality, with a Brāhmaṇa.

Among the twelve Aṅgas of the Jaina scripture, Sāmāiya (Sāmāyika) occupies the first place, and is known as the *Ācārāṅga-Sūtra*. We can find the religious and philosophical views of Mahāvīra most prominently in this work, which lays stress on the principle of equality. The Prakrit or the Māgadhī term '*sāmāiya*' has reference to the idea of equality (*sāmya*, *samatā*, or *sama*). There are in Jainism six necessary rites prescribed for the ascetics as well as the laity, and of these *sāmāiya* is the most important. Whenever a layman or an ascetic takes the vow of religious conduct in

[1] *Brāhmaṇa-vagga*, 26.

[2] *Śāntiparvan*, 263.34; 269.30-33. See also U. J. Sandesara, *Mahābhārata ane Uttarādhyayana-Sūtra* (Gujarati).

[3] *Uttarādhyayana-Sūtra*, 25.

accordance with his position and right, he utters the oath '*karemi bhante sāmāiyam*',[4] which means 'I undertake to observe, O Lord, the attitude of equality'. This has been clearly explained in the very next passage which runs: '*sāvajjaṁ jogaṁ paccakkhāmi*' (I dissociate myself from harmful activities according to my capacity). It is because of this supreme importance of *sāmāiya* that the famous scholiast Jinabhadragaṇi Kṣamāśramaṇa of the seventh century A.D. composed an elaborate commentary entitled the *Viśeṣāvaśyaka-bhāṣya* on it, and shown that these three factors of religion, viz. faith, knowledge, and conduct, constitute what is called *sāmāiya*.[5]

The author of the *Bhagavad-Gītā* composed his work on the basis of the attitude of equality that was already prevalent in such schools as the Sāṁkhya, Yoga, and Bhāgavata. This is the reason why we find in it, on numerous occasions, the inculcation of the spirit of equality by such terms as '*samadarśī*' (one possessed of the attitude of equality), '*sāmya*' (equality), and the like. This attitude of equality, as found in the *Gītā*, was originally identical with that found in the *Ācārāṅga-Sūtra*. But it has assumed different forms which were in accordance with the spirit of the systems with which it was integrated. The *Gītā* dissuades Arjuna from the acceptance of the life of a mendicant, and urges him to fight. The *Ācārāṅga-Sūtra*, on the other hand, would instead say: If you are a true warrior (*kṣatriya-vīra*), you should not enter into warfare when you are inspired by the attitude of equality. You can, on the contrary, fulfill the function of a true warrior only by fighting with your spiritual enemy by the acceptance of the life of a homeless mendicant. The Bharata-Bāhubalin episode, as recorded in the Jaina literature, clearly points to this spirit of Jainism. It is said there that when Bāhubalin raised his hand to take vengeance on his own brother Bharata, who had already struck him violently, the spiritual attitude of equality took possession of him and, under its influence, Bāhubalin accepted the life of a mendicant and did neither take revenge on Bharata nor claim from him his own due share of the kingdom.

COMPREHENSIVE APPLICATION OF NON-VIOLENCE

The attitude of equality has found expression in non-violence both in the domain of religious conduct and in that of philosophical thought.

Jainism does not endorse any religious act which does not promote the cause of non-violence. All the Jaina religious rites, external or internal, gross or subtle, were formulated round non-violence. Although every religious school has laid stress, to a more or less degree, on the principle of

Āvaśyaka-Sūtra, 5.
2673.

non-violence, the supreme importance and wide application that it receives in Jainism is not found in any other school.

In the domain of philosophical thought, it has given rise to the attitude of non-absolutism (Anekāntavāda) or the doctrine of 'explanation by division' (Vibhajyavāda). Obstinate insistence on one's own attitude and way of thought, considering them as the complete and ultimate truth, is an enemy of the attitude of equality. It is accordingly maintained that one should have as much respect for another's attitude as one has for one's own. The doctrine of Syādvāda, with its main reference to the linguistic aspect, and the doctrine of Nayas, with its reference to the thought aspect, are also the gradual outcome of this attitude. There is no subject of religious discipline or philosophical enquiry that has not been judged by the non-absolutistic standard or has been left out of its purview. Hence, whereas the authors of the other systems tacitly accepted non-absolutism and did not compose original literature on it, the Jaina authors composed a vast creative literature expounding and elaborating the non-absolutistic attitude and its two corollaries, viz. the doctrines of Syādvāda and Nayas.

To explain fully the implication of non-violence, Jainism has formulated: (1) the science (*vidyā*) of the selves (*ātman*); (2) the science of *karma*; (3) the science of conduct (*cāritra*); and (4) the science of the universe (*loka*). Similarly, to explain the principle of non-absolutism, it has developed: (1) the science of scriptural record (*śruta*); and (2) the science of logic and epistemology (*pramāṇa*). All these sciences constitute the soul of the legacy of Jainism. We shall here record some brief observations on these topics.

ĀTMAN

There is intrinsic equality among all selves, be they earth-bodied, water-bodied, vegetable oganisms, insects, birds, animals, or human beings. Non-violence consists in sincere and earnest exertion of oneself for the application of the principle of equality as far as possible in every field of life. To bring about such application in practical life, the *Ācārāṅga-Sūtra* asks us to feel the miseries of others as much as we do our own.

In regard to non-violence, the difference between the dualist systems, such as Jainism and the like, and the non-dualist Aupaniṣada (Upaniṣadic) system lies only in the fact that the former admit real plurality of selves and establish non-violence on the basis of the doctrine of intrinsic equality of selves, while the latter denies plurality of selves and establishes non-violence on the basis of their intrinsic identity. It seems that the doctrine of identity based upon non-dualism has gradually evolved from the doctrine of equality based upon dualism. However, what is of the utmost importance from the

point of view of non-violence is the fact that the actual feeling of equality or identity of the self with others is the primal source of the principle of non-violence.

KARMA

From the metaphysical doctrine of 'equality of selves', Jainism deduced also the spiritual law of Karma, which holds that all physical, mental, and other distinctions between one self and another are only adventitious, that is, are due to *karma* and not intrinsic. It follows from this that the least developed being, such as the vegetable organism, can develop into a human being, and can, by spiritual evolution, attain absolute freedom from bondage, and, conversely, a human being may return to the stage of a vegetable organism. The only determinant of the nature of the self, of its higher or lower stage of existence, as well as of its absolute freedom, is *karma,* also called *saṁskāra* (trace), or *vāsanā* (predisposition). The intrinsic equality of all selves is fully manifested when there is complete absence of *karma.*

If all the selves are intrinsically equal, why then is there this mutual inequality between them? Why again does the same self pass through different states at different moments? Jainism answers that, while the state of a self, no doubt, is in accordance with the nature of its *karma,* the self is, at the same time, free to do or not to do a good or a bad act ; it can serve a good or a bad purpose according to its will, and it creates its own future as well as the present. The law of Karma maintains that the present is created in accordance with the past and that the future is created on the basis of the present. The mutual relation of the past, present, and future is determined by it. This is the foundation of the doctrine of rebirth.

Karma, in reality, consists of ignorance and the passions of attachment and hatred. The absence of the true cognition of the intrinsic difference between the self and the not-self is ignorance, known as *darśanamoha* (perverted attitude) in Jainism. This ignorance has been called *avidyā* in such systems as the Sāṁkhya and the Buddhist. The predispositions and defilements which originate on account of the perverted assessment, due to the influence of ignorance, of the values of things have been briefly classified into two categories, viz. attachment and hatred. Although attachment and hatred are the origin of violence, yet the root cause of all evils is ignorance or *darśanamoha* or *avidyā.* Ignorance therefore is the root cause of violence. All those systems of thought which believe in the self agree on this issue.

The *karma,* whose nature has been described above, is technically known as *bhāva-karma* in Jainism. It is a kind of *saṁskāra* existing in

the self. This *bhāva-karma* attracts the subtle material atoms that always surround the self and gives them a definite form. The group of material atoms thus determined is called *dravya-karma* or the kārmic body (*kārmaṇa śarīra*), which follows the self in the next birth and forms the ground for the constitution of a new body. Although a cursory study shows that the conception of *dravya-karma* is a peculiarity only of the Jaina doctrine of Karma, and is absent in the doctrines of the other systems, yet a deep study will clearly show that this is not the fact. In such systems as the Sāṁkhya, the Yoga, and the Vedānta, there is the description of the subtle or the *liṅga* body which transmigrates to different births. This body has been regarded as constituted by such evolutes of Prakṛti (primordial principle of matter) or Māyā (the basic principle of illusion) as the internal organ (*antaḥ-karaṇa*), the ego-sense (*abhimāna*), the mind (*manas*), etc., and is obviously the substitute for the kārmic body of the Jains. Even the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school, which does not clearly admit such a subtle body, has accepted the atomic mind which transmigrates from one birth to another. The fundamental basis of the conceptions of the subtle body and the kārmic body is the same. If there is any difference, it is only with reference to its mode of description and elaboration and classification.

Like the Sāṁkhya-Yoga, the Vedānta, the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, and the Buddhist systems, Jainism believes that the association of *karma* with the soul is beginningless, because the beginning of that association is absolutely beyond the limit of knowledge. All the systems have unanimously admitted that, from the point of view of the chain of unbroken succession, the association of *karma* or *avidyā* or *māyā* with the soul is beginningless, but the association, as a case of particular occurrence, has a beginning, because we clearly feel that the *karma* or the predisposition (*vāsanā*) repeatedly originates in our life from ignorance and the passions of attachment and hatred. The reason why *karma* or predisposition can no more originate in the absolutely pure self, which emerges on the complete dissociation of *karma*, is that the soul has a natural tendency for purity, and such defects as ignorance and the passions of attachment and hatred are totally uprooted on the fullest expression of its intrinsic attributes, such as consciousness and the like, on account of absolute purification.

CARITRA

The function of religious conduct (*cāritra*) is to remove the conditions of the state of inequality existing in our life, and such conduct is known as *saṁvara* (self-control) in Jainism. Ignorance, the root cause of the state of inequality, is destroyed by the real comprehension of the nature of the self, and such passions as attachment and hatred are removed by the fulfil-

ment of the attitude of indifference (*mādhyasthya*). The spiritual conduct therefore consists in these two factors: (1) knowledge of the self, or comprehension of the distinction between the self and the not-self (*samyag-darśana* or *viveka-khyāti*); and (2) absolute indifference to, or conquest of, the passions of attachment and hatred. Only such activities as self-concentration, vows, principles of self-control and austerity, which help the growth of the internal spiritual conduct, are regarded as forming the code of external conduct for the spiritual aspirant.

The evolution of spiritual life depends upon the gradual development of the internal spiritual conduct. Jainism gives a very vivid and elaborate description of this development in its doctrine of 'the stages of spiritual development' (*guṇasthānas*). Anyone interested in the stages of spiritual evolution will find it useful and interesting to compare such stages as the *madhumatī* and the like of the Yoga system, the stages of *srotāpanna* and the like of Buddhism, the various stages of ignorance and enlightenment of the *Yogavāsiṣṭha*, the stages of *mandabhūmi* and the like of the Ājīvika school, and the *guṇasthānas* and the *yogadṛṣṭis* of Jainism.[6]

We shall describe here not the fourteen *guṇasthānas*, but the three stages into which the *guṇasthānas* can be classified. The first stage is known as the state of the exterior self (*bahirātman*), wherein there is the total absence of the knowledge of the self or the comprehension of the distinction between the self and the not-self. The second stage is known as the state of the interior self (*antarātman*), wherein there is the knowledge of the self, but the passions of attachment and hatred, even though they are mild, have not yet lost their hold upon the soul. The third stage is the state of the transcendental self (*paramātman*). There is absolute destruction of attachment and hatred at this stage, and the soul has attained freedom from the influence of passions (*vītarāgatva*).

LOKA

This science describes the nature of the universe. The universe consists of nothing but the mutual association of the two fundamental principles of *jīva* (the principle of consciousness) and *ajīva* (unconscious matter). These two, *jīva* and *ajīva*, are eternal entities, which were neither born nor will ever perish. The substance that has its supreme influence on the principle of consciousness in its worldly career is only the *pudgala* (material atoms), which comes into association with the soul in a number of ways and also delimits its various capacities. But the principle of consciousness has intrinsic and fundamental potencies, which, when properly

[6] For a fuller discussion of this topic, see author's article in Gujarati on '*Bhāratīya Darśanomān Ādhyātmika Vikāsakrama*', in *Purātattva*, I. p. 199.

directed, will eventually emancipate the consciousness from the influence of the material atoms. The universe is nothing but the field of the mutual influence of consciousness and matter, and freedom from this influence is the end of the universe. The Jaina conception of the universe and its space tallies in many respects with the conceptions of the Sāṁkhya-Yoga, the Purāṇas, and the Buddhist schools.

The Jains, like the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, are atomists and are not, like the Sāṁkhya-Yoga, the upholders of the principle of one Prakṛti as the basis of the world. But the nature of an atom of the Jains has more similarity with the nature of the Prakṛti of the Sāṁkhya-Yoga than with the nature of the atom of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika. The atom of the Jains undergoes transformations like the Prakṛti of the Sāṁkhya-Yoga, and is not absolutely unchanging like the atom of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika. It is therefore held that, even as the one uniform Prakṛti of the Sāṁkhya becomes the ground of the manifold physical creation of earth, water, fire, air, ether, etc., exactly so the atom of the Jains can transform itself into various forms such as earth, water, fire, etc. The Jaina school does not agree with the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika in admitting that the material atoms of earth, water, etc. belong to fundamentally different types. Another basic difference is that the atom of the Jains is so subtle, as compared with the atom of the Vaiśeṣika, that, ultimately, it becomes as unmanifest (*avyakta*) as the Prakṛti of the Sāṁkhya. The Jaina doctrine of the infinity of atoms is not very dissimilar to the doctrine of plurality of *prakṛtis* of the old Sāṁkhyas, corresponding to the doctrine of the plurality of *puruṣas*.[7]

The Jaina system also, like the Sāṁkhya-Yoga, the Mīmāṁsaka, and the like, regards the universe as beginningless and endless from the standpoint of the chain of unbroken succession. It does not believe, like the Paurāṇika or the Vaiśeṣika systems, in the periodic dissolution and re-creation of the universe. Therefore, there is no place in Jainism for an independent person like God as Creator or Destroyer. Jainism believes that every individual self is responsible for its own creation, that is to say, the creation of its own *karma* and its results, such as the body and the like. According to it, there is, intrinsically, Godhood in every individual, and this becomes manifest in the state of emancipation. The soul which has manifested its Godhood becomes the object of worship of the common people. The God of the Yoga school is also only an object of worship and not the Creator or Destroyer. But there is basic difference between the conceptions of the Jaina and the Yoga schools. The God of the Yoga school

[7] Cf. *Maulika-Sāṁkhyā hi ātmānaṁ ātmānaṁ prati pṛthak pradhānaṁ vadanti ; uttare tu Sāṁkhyāḥ sarvātmasvapi ekaṁ nityaṁ pradhānaṁ iti prapannāḥ* (*Ṣaḍdarśana-samuccaya, Guṇaratna-ṭīkā*, p. 99).

is eternally free and was never in bondage, and thus belongs to a separate category from that of the ordinary souls, whereas the God of Jainism is not such. Jainism believes that every competent spiritual aspirant can attain to Godhood, inasmuch as it is capable of being achieved by proper spiritual exertion, and that all the emancipated souls are equally the objects of worship as Gods.

ŚRUTA

The science of scriptural record consists in the faithful compilation of the old as well as the up-to-date thoughts of other thinkers as also the thoughts founded on one's own experience. The object of this science is that no thought, or way of thought, which aims at Truth, should be despised or ignored, and therefore the science has gradually developed along with the growth of new lines of thought. It is because of this that in the same context where formerly only the *sad-advaita* (non-dualism of the existent) of the Sāṁkhya was mentioned as an instance of the *saṅgraha-naya* (standpoint of the universal) in the texts, in later times, after the development of the thought of *Brahmādvaita* (non-dualism of Brahman), this latter thought also found place as an instance of the same *naya* (standpoint). Similarly, where formerly the old Buddhist doctrine of momentariness was given as an instance of the *ṛjusūtra-naya* (standpoint of the immediate present), in later times, after the development of Mahāyānism, all the four famous Buddhist schools, viz. the two Hīnayāna schools of Vaibhāṣika and Sautrāntika, as well as the two Mahāyāna schools of Yogācāra and Mādhyamika, the latter two upholding momentary consciousness (*vijñāna*) alone, or the unsubstantiality of things (*śūnyatā*), respectively, as the truth, found place as instances of the same *naya*.

The field of activity of the attitude of non-absolutism is so vast and extensive that all the empirical and transcendental sciences that are conducive to the well-being of human life find their proper place in it. It is for this reason that, in addition to the transcendental sciences, the empirical sciences have also found place in the Jaina scriptures.

PRAMĀṆA

In the science of logic and epistemology, all the organs of knowledge, such as perception, inference, etc., and the means thereof as well as their relative strength have been elaborately described. In this field also the non-absolutist attitude has been so comprehensively applied that no sincere thought of any philosopher has been despised or ignored. But, on the contrary, all the available thoughts regarding knowledge and its instruments have been properly blended into a harmonious system.

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SOME ASPECTS OF EARLY BUDDHISM

HERE by 'Early Buddhism' is meant Buddhism as based upon the Pali canon, and by 'Buddhism' is meant a distinct body of culture, or a distinct movement of civilization, with its historical background in the literature, religions, and philosophies, as well as in the social, educational, and other institutions, of India. This body of culture, or movement of civilization, has for its vital force an inspiration and guidance ever sought from contemplation of the personality, the message, the teaching, the example, and the tradition of a highly gifted individual called the Buddha. This particular culture or civilization has different aspects of development —palaeographic, linguistic, literary, religious, philosophical, ethical, social, artistic, and the like—, each of which calls for, and deserves, patient study, special investigation, careful consideration, and prudent judgement. Thus to contemplate Early Buddhism is mainly to consider that vital energy or inherent force of Buddhism in the earlier phases of its articulation and development by which various aspects of human culture or civilization represented by it gradually developed.

THE PALI CANON

The Pali canon, on the evidence of which this consideration is here based, is not a book which took its shape or came into existence all at once. It is only a corpus of texts that grew up by stages, and no less by different permutations and combinations, additions and alterations, and expositions and deliberations. And yet the whole of it is allowed by tradition to pass as *Buddha-vacana,* the Word of the Buddha. It is also honoured as *pavacana* (*pravacana*), the best of words; it is called *satthu-sāsana,* the authority of the Master; it constitutes *pariyatti,* the main subject of study, to the disciples and followers of the Buddha. It is to the same corpus of original and authoritative texts, as distinguished from the *aṭṭhakathās* or commentaries, that the name Pali was originally applied.

Pali as a language is no other than that which came to be known from a certain date as 'Tantibhāsā' or diction of that corpus of texts. It is claimed by Buddhaghoṣa, the greatest known Pali commentator, that the language through the medium of which the Buddha promulgated his doctrine and discipline was Māgadhī. To Buddhaghoṣa as well as to other Pali commentators, Māgadhī is indeed the *nirutti* or diction of what is now known as the Pali canon. Whether or not the language of the extant

canon developed on the habitual diction of the Buddha is still a disputed question. Some attempts have recently been made to ascertain what the Buddha's habitual diction was, but these have ended, on the whole, in certain speculations without any solution of the main problem. Attempts have been made to throw some light on this subject from the language of the inscriptions of Aśoka, and it has been rightly suggested that the one at Girnar is the main set of Aśoka's edicts, the dialectal basis of which is in many respects similar to that of Pali.

The history of the Pali canon itself covers some five centuries of literary development from the day of the first impetus given it by the Buddha to that of the first commitment of the texts to writing towards the middle or end of the first century B.C., during the reign of King Vaṭṭagāmaṇi, a pious Buddhist king of Ceylon. The Pali canon became virtually closed, once it was committed to writing, there being hardly any new addition to it thereafter. Most of the texts of this canon are mentioned by name in the *Milindapañha,* a notable Pali work of the first or second century A.D. The possibility of any further additions to, or changes in, those texts was finally checked by the growth of *aṭṭhakathās* in Sinhalese, on the basis of which Buddhaghoṣa, Buddhadatta, and Dhammapāla wrote their commentaries.

A broad distinction is sought to be made between the canon and the Pali literature that subsequently developed by the denial of individual authorship in respect of the former and the claim of individual authorship in respect of the latter. In other words, the growth of the canon is accounted for as a total result of joint efforts of many, rather than as literary productions of individual teachers or authors. According to traditional computation, the canon is composed of 84,000 *dhammakkhandhas*—sections and paragraphs, chapters and verses, as one might say—, out of which 82,000 are the Buddha's own, and the remaining 2,000 only are to be ascribed to his disciples. Even the words of his disciples, the Buddha is said to have made his own by virtue of the seal of his approval attached to them. Even where the fact of approval is wanting, all that is added to the canon is regarded as the Buddha's own word on the ground that everything developed on the basis of *mātikās* (*mātṛkās*) or schemes formulated by him.

VIMUTTI, THE CENTRAL INSPIRATION OF MANIFOLD DEVELOPMENTS

Though in this canon many things—legends and anecdotes, similes and metaphors, phrases and idioms—may be shown to have been taken almost verbatim from the then current Indian stock, all, as interwoven into a composite whole, breathe the same spirit, suggest the same trend of thought, and serve one and the same end. Just as from whichever part of a sea water is tasted, its taste is salt (*loṇarasa*), so *vimutti* or emancipation

of *citta* (consciousness) is the underlying religious sentiment of every part of the canon, as of the whole. *Vimutti* is indeed the *rasa* or central interest which gives a new character or tone to the whole of the corpus of texts* composing the Pali canon.[1] This fact cannot be gainsaid, in spite of its various divisions and types of literature.[2] Thus this *vimutti*—the free state of mind which follows upon attaining omniscience and sense of peacefulness of the entire being—, which, it is claimed, was experienced for the first time by the Buddha in that age, is the central point of interest, so far as the purely spiritual aspect of *Buddha-vacana* is concerned.

Emancipation or freedom being inwardly a feeling in its character, and a state of consciousness itself, there necessarily arises a psychological or psychical aspect, without appreciating which one cannot realize the religious or spiritual aspect. When *vimutti* is considered as the ultimate concept or category of thought, there arises an aspect which is epistemological. When it is viewed as a thing or element in itself, the aspect or interest is ontological. When *vimutti* in this aspect is considered from the point of view of the continuity of an individual, the aspect or interest is eschatological. When it is made the basis of human conduct and action, the aspect or interest is ethical or moral. When it is made the source of inspiration for creation and self-expression, the aspect or interest is literary or artistic. When it is treated as the subject of exposition, the aspect or interest is exegetical. When it is used as a means to the solution of problems, the aspect or interest is philosophical. When it is viewed as the highest object of veneration, the aspect or interest is devotional. When it is sought to be realized as the ideal of self-perfection, the aspect or interest is disciplinary or educational. It is in this manner that the rise of manifold aspects of Early Buddhism is to be envisaged. *Nibbāna* (*nirvāṇa*) is the grand name for *vimutti* which constitutes the central interest in Early Buddhism.

CETO-VIMUTTI AND PAÑÑĀ-VIMUTTI

Early Buddhism broadly speaks of two aspects of *vimutti*: *ceto-vimutti* and *paññā-vimutti*, emancipation by way of attainment of the free state of consciousness and emancipation by way of development of reason or knowledge. The stepping-stone to either is *sīla*,[3] a term which comprehends the whole of man's moral sphere of existence and behaviour. *Sīla*, *citta*, and *paññā* are the three main terms of the entire system of which the ultimate aim is the attainment of emancipation.

* In this and the following articles, the Pali works referred to are mostly those published by the Pali Text Society, London—Ed.

[1] *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, IV. p. 203; *Udāna*, p. 56.

[2] *Sumaṅgala-vilāsinī*, I. p. 20; *Atthasālinī*, p. 17.

[3] *Saṁyutta Nikāya*, I. p. 23; *Milindapañha*, p. 34; *Visuddhi-magga*, I. p. 1.

Citta or *samādhi* comprehends the whole of man's psychical sphere of existence and experience. *Paññā* or *vipassanā* comprehends the whole of man's rational sphere of existence and intellection. He who follows the path of *citta* or *samādhi,* to the exclusion of the other path, is called in later Pali nomenclature *samathayānī,* a follower of the path to tranquillity. He who follows the path of *paññā,* to the exclusion of the former, is called *vipassanāyānī,* a follower of the path of knowledge. The highest ideal of the path is the fulfilment of both the *yānas*: *samatha* and *vipassanā.* The process of *samathayāna* is essentially physio-psychological, mystical, psychical, or intuitional. The directness of perception or immediacy of experience is the characteristic feature of this process. He who follows it exclusively aspires at the most to become a *kāyasakkhī* or eye-witness to all presentations to, or to all states of, consciousness. The process of *vipassanāyāna* is, on the other hand, essentially ratiocinative, reflective, or philosophical, and he who fulfils it is called *paññā-vimutta,* emancipated by way of reason or knowledge. This latter process has for its presupposition the former, so that he who fulfils it really fulfils both. The consummation of *paññā-vimutti* therefore is aptly described as *ubhatobhāga-vimutti,* emancipation by way of both.

SADDHĀ, SAMADHI, AND PAÑÑĀ

Four subordinate ways of emancipation are mentioned, namely: (1) that of a simple faith—the way of *saddhānusārī* ; (2) that of moral action and piety—the way of *dhammānusārī* ; (3) that of religious conviction—the way of *saddhā-vimutta* ; and (4) that of rational faith—the way of *diṭṭhipatta.*[4] The first three ways are but three aspects of *saddhā* or faith, and the fourth way is just a step to *paññā-vimutti.* So in another formation, *saddhā, samādhi,* and *paññā* are set forth as three principal terms of Early Buddhism, *saddhā* being the first step towards *samādhi* and *paññā.* In a formal discussion and estimate of the values of the three, *saddhā*—the strong point of the *saddhā-vimutta, samādhi*—the strong point of *kāyasakkhī,* and *paññā*—the strong point of *diṭṭhipatta* or *paññā-vimutta,* none is allowed precedence over the other two, each and all of them being taken in their highest values as balanced, synthesized, or co-ordinated in one and the same system.[5]

Of the three, *saddhā, samādhi,* and *paññā,* the first is the means of developing highest reverence for the Triad (*triratna*) ; the second is the means of developing the three kinds of *vijjā* (*vidyā*) or faculty, and the third is the means of developing the three kinds of *paññā* or knowledge.

[4] *Majjhima Nikāya,* I. p. 439.
[5] *Aṅguttara,* I. pp. 118-20.

The Triad consists of (1) Buddha—the man, the master, the personality; (2) Dhamma—the message, the doctrine and discipline, the system; and (3) Saṅgha—the Order, the organization, the institution. The three kinds of *vijjā* are: (1) *pubbenivāsānussati-ñāṇa*—the faculty of recalling all past experiences of oneself acquired in successive births or existences; (2) *sattānaṁ cutūpapāta-ñāṇa*—the faculty of visualizing the rise and fall of all beings from one state or position to another according to their deeds; (3) *āsavānaṁ khaya-ñāṇa*—the faculty of perceiving the course of attenuation of all extraneous impediments to consciousness.[6] The three kinds of *paññā* are: (1) *sutamayī*—the knowledge which develops from an acquaintance with the words and views of others; (2) *cintāmayī*—the knowledge which develops from self-induced reason; and (3) *bhāvanāmayī*—the knowledge which develops by way of formulation of one's own system in relation to the current thoughts and ideas.[7] The rise of the faculties leads to the attainment of *vimutti* or free state of consciousness, and the latter in its turn leads to the acquisition of *vasībhāva* or mastery. Thus *vijjā, vimutti,* and *vasībhāva* are taken to constitute three successive steps in the process of individual perfection.

MATIKAS OR SCHEMES OF THOUGHT

The literary product of the first kind of *vijjā*, called *pubbenivāsānussati-ñāṇa,* is the Jātaka, representing, as it does, the progressive course of an evolving individual culminating in Buddhàhood. The literary product of the second kind of *vijjā*, called *sattānaṁ cutūpapāta-ñāṇa,* is the Apadāna (Avadāna), recounting, as it does, the progressive course of other evolving individuals, the *theras* and the *therīs,* culminating in Arhathood or sainthood. The net outcome of the third kind of *vijjā*, called *āsavānaṁ khaya-ñāṇa,* is the formulation of various *mātikās* or architectonics of thought, which came to be known as *sattatiṁsa-bodhipakkhiya dhammā,* the thirty-seven terms appertaining to the system of Buddhist thought. These terms are so well devised as to be considered sufficient to comprehend the entire universe of knowledge and discourse. The system is so well founded and well propounded that it is claimed in one of the Suttas that whatever the path actually adopted and followed for the attainment of *vimutti,* that path cannot but come within the scope of that which is outlined by these terms. The simile by which the point is illustrated is as follows: Just as where a walled and vigilantly watched city exists allowing a passage out of it only through one gate, all persons who pass out of this city must be said to have passed through that one gate, in the same way, all persons

[6] *Majjhima,* I, *Bhayabherava-Sutta.*
[7] *Dīgha Nikāya,* III. p. 219; *Nettipakaraṇa,* p. 8.

who proceed towards final emancipation must be taken to have followed a course that falls within the scope of the system so outlined.[8]

Thus it is on the comprehensiveness and universalization of the central concepts of the system that the claims of Early Buddhism are based. The system is so well tested and so much perfected in its comprehensiveness that it is launched forth as sufficient in itself for the guidance of all persons striving for *vimutti* without having to wait for the personal authority of a Master. Hence its best description is *ehi-passika dhamma*, the system with its motto: 'Come and see'.[9] Hence the commanding word of advice: 'So behave that you make yourselves your own island, your own refuge, and that you seek no other refuge. So behave that you rely upon the system as your own island, as your own refuge, and that you seek no other refuge.'[10] Hence the assurance given that the system in itself is capable of taking the place of the Master in his absence.[11] Hence the reason why no personal successor to the headship of the Order was nominated by the Buddha, or why he himself did not claim that headship,[12] though as a matter of fact, he acted as the forerunner, the pioneer, the inspirer to all who left the world and passed into the homeless state of recluses, to walk on the path leading to *vimutti*.[13]

Thus there are different formulations or architectonics of the system called *mātikās*, each of them representing a particular setting of terms comprehending either a universe of life and experience, or of thought and knowledge, or of discourse and action. The gradational arrangement of terms in each of these settings is devised to meet all actual or possible situations which arise in reality from the procession of natural events, mental phenomena, or the steps of thought. The *mātikās*, as abstract schemes, are fixed once for all, while the processions are left to be envisaged individually in experience. In other words, it can be said that all the words of the Buddha contained in the Pali canon can be reduced to certain *mātikās* or abstract schemes of thought, developed and applied differently to suit different occasions or purposes. It is accordingly on the soundness of those *mātikās* that the claim of the Buddha's omniscience (*sabbaññutā*) ultimately rests.

METHODS OF INTERPRETATION

All these basic formulations with their different annotations, applications, exemplifications, and discussions constitute the system of Early Buddhism. The teachers through whose instrumentality this system

[8] *Dīgha*, II. p. 83.
[9] *Ibid.*, II. p. 93.
[10] *Ibid.*, II. p. 100.
[11] *Ibid.*, II. p. 154.
[12] *Ibid.*, II. p. 100.
[13] *Majjhima*, I, *Bhayabherava-Sutta*.

developed have suggested certain keys to unveiling its secret—certain directions as to how to appreciate its content. These keys or directions are therefore mainly concerned with the method of its interpretation, and are as follows:

(i) From the point of view of *saddhā-vimutti*, there are three different approaches: one from the Buddha—the teacher, the master, the personality; one from Dhamma—the teaching, the principle, the system; and one from Saṅgha—the Order, the organization, the institution.

(ii) From the point of view of *ceto-vimutti*, there are three different approaches: one from *pubbenivāsānussati-ñāṇa*, the faculty of recalling one's past career and experiences; one from *sattānaṁ cutūpapāta-ñāṇa*, the faculty of recounting the career and experiences of others; and one from *āsavānaṁ khaya-ñāṇa*, the faculty of getting rid of all impediments to a free state of consciousness.

(iii) From the point of view of *paññā-vimutti*, there are three different approaches: one from *sutamayī paññā*, book-knowledge; one from *cintāmayī paññā*, knowledge based upon original thinking; and one from *bhāvanāmayī paññā*, systematic knowledge.

Thus the words of the Buddha admit of different interpretations from different points of view.

Each and every interpretation is welcome, if it suggests or can be taken to suggest *vimutti* as the underlying trend and ultimate goal of Buddhism. But issue will be joined as soon as it is claimed and maintained that any one of these interpretations is the only valid and convincing interpretation. The textual interpretation, as pointed out in the *Nettipakaraṇa* and the *Peṭakopadesa*, is only a mechanical interpretation from the point of view of *sutamayī paññā*. There are two other higher interpretations possible, one from the standpoint of *cintāmayī paññā*, and the other from *bhāvanāmayī paññā*, neither of which is attempted in the *Netti*.

The so-called four noble truths (*cattāri ariyasaccāni*), the fourfold insight (*cattāro paṭisambhidā*), the four modes of mindfulness (*cattāro satipaṭṭhānā*), the five *indriyas*, the five *balas*, the seven constituents of knowledge, i.e. *bodhi* (*satta bojjhaṅgā*), the noble eightfold path (*ariyo aṭṭhaṅgiko maggo*), and the rest are all reducible to so many *mātikās* or ready schemes of thought, some with four headings, some with five, some with seven, some with eight, each of them being so well formulated as to be able to serve as a definite structure of thought for a systematic and comprehensive discussion of a subject concerned.

The claim set forth is that whatever the statements on a subject for which a particular *mātikā* is meant, those statements will fall within the scope of that *mātikā*. To claim that no one can reasonably add a fifth

heading to the underlying scheme of four noble truths is to maintain that the scheme, as it stands, is sufficiently comprehensive to contain or accommodate the whole universe of thought, or of discourse, bearing upon the subject for which it is intended. The four headings have been filled up, interpreted, and illustrated by these four terms: *dukkha* (suffering), *dukkhasamudaya* (the cause of suffering), *dukkhanirodha* (the cessation of suffering), and *dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadā* (the way leading to the cessation of suffering).

This mode of presentation has well served the purpose of the Saṅgha in its mission work. Attempts have even been made to show that this Buddhist scheme of thought with regard to *dukkha* was made to run parallel to that which was adopted in the science of medicine with regard to disease (*roga*), or that which was adopted in the science of wealth with regard to waste (*apacaya*), or that in the Yoga system of Patañjali with regard to the world (*saṁsāra*). The scheme of thought, as it stands, is thoroughly logical or scientific, no doubt. But as explained from the Saṅgha point of view, the whole doctrine appears to be a shibboleth of mission work.[14] That the whole of existence suggests pain as an experience, or that pain is involved in the whole of existence, is a truth the validity of which rests upon a powerful appeal to the sentiment of a man in a psychological mood. A truth which is so conditioned hardly deserves the name of truth. It is rather a mood or motive than truth.

So to serve as a sound architectonic of thought, the underlying scheme of the so-called four noble truths must be viewed and interpreted differently to make it universally applicable to all matters of truth. Happily, it is suggested throughout the *Paṭisambhidā-magga* that the four points in the scheme of four truths are but typical illustrations of four points in the underlying scheme of four *paṭisambhidās*. Even this latter interpretation is so mechanical and arbitrary that no one can seriously take it to be a sound scheme of thought. In setting out to establish a stereotyped textual interpretation suited to its own purpose, the Saṅgha appears to have missed altogether the meaning of the *mātikā* from the point of view of original thought and systematic knowledge. The *mātikā* with four headings must be taken to imply that each and every original thought on a subject, whatever the subject, in order to be systematic, complete, and comprehensive, must embrace these four aspects of investigation or discussion:

(1) What are the current or accepted ideas of the time?

(2) How do they arise, what is their common ground, and does that ground still hold good?

(3) Is there any new ground of thought or investigation? If so, what

[14] *Dhammacakka-pavattana-Sutta.*

is it, and what new aspect or character will the problems assume when inquiry proceeds from that new ground, and what new decisions will be arrived at?

(4) What new deductions will follow therefrom for general guidance of human life, thought, and action?

Thus statements under the first two headings are concerned with *sammuti* or accepted truths or current beliefs, and those under the remaining two headings are concerned with the advanced views of the thinker himself. The statement of current views, their meaning, the thesis, and the deductions are the four headings of the particular *mātikā* within the scope of which all statements of a person on a subject are bound to fall, and there is no room for the addition of an extra heading.

If the *mātikās* of four *satipaṭṭhānas,* taken together with those of four *jhānas,* be shown to agree in many respects with the Yoga system of Patañjali, the agreement between the two systems is not to be used as a proof of borrowing from a Hindu source which is pre-Pātañjala and pre-Buddhistic. If Patañjali's treatise be chronologically later than the Pali canon, the agreement should rather be taken to attest the soundness of the *mātikā* as it finally shaped itself in *Buddha-vacana.* All systems that are sufficiently analytical are expected to fall in harmony with the *mātikās* set forth, and it would be rather disappointing if they do not so harmonize. If any system of thought accords with any of the *mātikās,* it does not mean that that system represents the whole content of Early Buddhism, which inwardly aspires to be that and something more than that (*uttaritara*).[15]

Just as, on the one hand, an interpretation based upon one *mātikā* or one set of *mātikās* is bound to be one-sided, and therefore incomplete and ultimately unsatisfactory, so, on the other, all interpretations, if they are detached and disconnected, are inconclusive. It is accordingly urged that a method of interpretation must be followed by which all the *mātikās* may be made to appear in their logical or organic interconnection and lead to a central point. The simile by which this matter is to be illustrated is that of a *kūṭāgāra* or one-peaked house. Just as in a *kūṭāgāra,* the frame, the rafters, and the thatch of the roof, all taper to a point, in the same way, the whole setting of the *mātikās,* as adopted in an interpretation, must lead to a central point, which is no other than *vimutti*[16] or emancipation, by way of faith (*saddhā*), by way of vision of a free state of consciousness (*samādhi*), by way of reason or knowledge (*paññā*), or by way of all.

[15] *Dīgha,* III. p. 28 ; cf. *Majjhima,* I, *Mūlapariyāya-Sutta,* in which the sense of *uttaritara* is implied in *abhijānāti.* Cf. also *Majjhima,* I, *Rathavinīta-* and *Mahā-assapura-Suttas.*

[16] *Milindapañha,* p. 38.

RESOLUTION OF INTERNAL CONFLICT THROUGH SUÑÑATĀ

There is an eternal internal conflict in the mind of each individual arising from the sense of discordance between man's natural yearning for an immortal, immutable, and sinless state, on the one hand, and the contingency of birth, decay, death, and sin, daily experienced, on the other. A vivid description of this conflict which lies at the back of all religious quest (*ariyā pariyesanā*) is given in the *Ariya-pariyesana-Sutta*.[17]

The key to the solution of this internal problem of an individual is to be found in the internal vision of *citta* or consciousness when it is in itself, in the highest state of its freedom and purity. *Suññatā* (*śūnyatā*) or unrelatedness is the highest conceivable condition of consciousness. According to later Buddhist terminology, *śūnyatā* is nothing but *grāhya-grāhaka-bhāvarahitatā*, the absence of subject-object relation. This vision dawns on the consciousness when there are no impediments to obstruct it. The means by which the vision may be obtained is the practice of *jhāna* or meditation. Four *jhāna* stages are to be gone through on the four levels of consciousness, or the four planes of experience, called *avacaras*: *kāma, rūpa, arūpa,* and *lokuttara.* Eight *samāpattis* or states of trance are said to have been attained by the Indian *yogins* already before the advent of the Buddha.[18] These *samāpattis* or *samādhis* make up a range of the mind from the lowest of the *kāma* levels to the highest of the *arūpa.* It is claimed that the ninth state, called *saññāvedayita-nirodha,* was reached by the Buddha for the first time in history, who thus achieved the highest record on the highest of the *lokuttara* levels and planes. When this state of trance is reached, the person attaining it appears to be in all sense dead, but for the *uṣmā* or bodily warmth as the only palpable sign of life.[19] It is in this state that the attainment of *ceto-vimutti* or *cetaso vimokho* is really possible.

This unprecedented achievement in the psychical sphere enabled the Buddha to stratify the mental levels, planes of experience, and the states of trance, and to lay the foundation of a complete system of physio-psychology with the superaddition of an altogether new section called *lokuttara* or supra-normal,[20] not abnormal, which would be rather misleading. The passage of the mind from level to level, from plane to plane, or from trance to trance is inwardly a feeling process of isolation or self-alienation from object to object, the highest condition being reached when all sense of the object, and so of the subject, vanishes altogether. Each recurring experience suggests the idea of a *dhātu* or element in itself. On the

[17] *Majjhima*, I. pp. 161 ff. [18] *Ibid.*, I. p. 165. [19] *Ibid.*, I. p. 296.
[20] See *Dhammasaṅgaṇi, Cittakaṇḍa* and *Rūpakaṇḍa*.

occurrence of each experience, the conscious feeling is—'It is' (*atthi*), and nothing beyond it.[21]

It is only in this psychical process that the experience becomes possible, the personality develops, and an open declaration to that effect follows. But as no experience recurs precisely in one and the same form, no stable ground of identity is found in actuality. There is an element of novelty which ultimately goes to render each experience unique, with the result that the concepts or generalized ideas, based upon the common features noticed, are only intellectual approximations never restoring the actual facts of experience that only occurred once and for all. From the point of view of volition, the net result of the success in enabling the mind to pass from level to level, from plane to plane, and from trance to trance is that thereby all stages of consciousness, both supra-liminal and subliminal, are brought to view in the same stretch of *ekaggatā* or one-pointedness of mind. The whole mechanism of mind being gone through, and its working seen, the key is at last found to purify one's entire nature, both within and without (*anusaya* and *pariyuṭṭhāna*), destroying the sin, root and branch. *Saṁsāra* is the process of the rise and intensification of complexity of mind. *Nibbāna* or *nirvāṇa* is the process of the lessening of complexity and the realization of the serenity of mind. Both being the possibilities in one and the same reality, it is for each individual to choose the one or the other.[22]

ATTITUDE TOWARDS OTHER SYSTEMS OF THOUGHT

If *vimutti* be the guiding central principle of Early Buddhism in all the interpretations within its own system, the question arises, What is its attitude towards all prevalent currents of Indian thought in the midst of which it arose? The attitude of Early Buddhism towards those types of thought without is fundamentally the same as that towards the diverse interpretations within.

The current thoughts of the age are broadly classified under these three heads: (1) *sakkāya-diṭṭhi*; (2) *vicikicchā*; and (3) *sīlabbata-parāmāsa*.[23] *Sakkāya-diṭṭhi* is not the Satkāryavāda of the Sāṁkhya system, but just another name of Attavāda—all manner of thinking or speculation about the nature, existence, and destiny of the self and the world as a whole. *Atthi* and *natthi*, or *sassata* and *uccheda*, are mentioned as two main subdivisions of *sakkāya-diṭṭhi*. *Vicikicchā*, as employed in the context, is not a mere psychological term meaning doubt or perplexity, but a philosophical term designating all manner of thinking or speculation savouring of scepticism, involving doubt as the mental factor. Similarly, *sīlabbata-parāmāsa*

[21] *Dīgha*, *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna-Suttanta*; *Majjhima*, *Satipaṭṭhāna-Sutta*.
[22] *Majjhima*, I. pp. 167-68.
[23] *Ratana-Sutta* in *Suttanipāta* and *Khuddaka-pāṭha*.

is no mere ritualistic term, but a philosophical term designating all manner of thinking or speculation tending to hold that the whole sphere of conduct or behaviour may be governed by a code of ethics or a code of discipline. Corresponding to the three Pali terms, the Jaina canon has *akiriya*, *aṇṇāṇa*, and *vinaya*, regarding which one has the following fruitful observations from Professor Jacobi:

> 'The views of the *ajñānikas*, or agnostics, are not clearly stated in the texts, and the explanation of the commentators of all these philosophies . . . is vague and misleading. But from Buddhist writings, we may form a pretty correct idea of what agnosticism (better scepticism) was like. It is, according to the *Sāmaññaphala-Sutta*, the doctrine of Sañjaya Belaṭṭhiputta. . . . It is evident that the agnostics examined all modes of existence or non-existence of a thing, and if it were anything transcendental or beyond human experience, they negatived all those modes of expression. The records of the Buddhists and Jains about the philosophical ideas current at the time of the Buddha and Mahāvīra, meagre though they be, are of the greatest importance to the historian of that epoch. For they show us the ground on which, and the materials with which, a religious reformer had to build his system. The similarity between those "heretical" doctrines on the one side, and Jaina or Buddhist ideas on the other, is very suggestive, and favours the assumption that the Buddha, as well as Mahāvīra, owed some of his conceptions to these very heretics, and formulated others under the influence of the controversies which were continually going on with them. . . . The subtle discussions of the agnostics had probably misled many of his (Mahāvīra's) contemporaries. Consequently the Syādvāda must have appeared to them as a happy way leading out of the maze of the Ajñānavāda.'[24]

The doctrine of Pakudha Kaccāyana, as stated in the *Sāmaññaphala* and other Suttas, serves as a typical example of Sassatavāda or *āstikya*, and that of Ajita Keśakambalin of Ucchedavāda or *nāstikya*. The ascetic code of expiatory discipline and the legal code of the Brāhmaṇa lawgivers serve as the typical example of *sīlabbata-parāmāsa* or Vinayavāda—formalism. The earlier form of Vedānta or Brahmavāda,[25] the Vedānta of the Upaniṣads, was well known, and so, perhaps, was known a type of Sāṁkhya-Yoga, which was then shaping itself through some of the earlier Upaniṣads, notably the *Kaṭha*. Like Sāṁkhya-Yoga, there were three other pairs of terms current—(1) Vibhajjavāda and Kammavāda, to characterize the system of the Buddha; (2) Syādvāda and Kriyāvāda, to characterize the system of

[24] *Jaina-Sūtras* (S. B. E.), II. pp. xxvi-xxviii.
[25] *Vinaya-mahāvagga, Vedantagū Udāna*, p. 3.

Mahāvīra; and (3) *saṁsāra-suddhi* and *āhāra-suddhi*, to characterize the doctrine of Makkhali Gosāla, the system of the Ājīvikas.

Now, with regard to each and every one of these prevalent types of thought or speculation, the criticism offered is that from the standpoint of *sammā* (*samyak*), as contrasted with, or distinguished from, it, the rest of the standpoints, whether dogmatist, sceptic, or formalist, represent only varying degrees of *micchā* (*mithyā*). None of the types is discarded *in toto* as false or erroneous. Each and every type is taken to hold good as far as it goes, or as far as the way it traverses. Each has been viewed as a limited procession of thought, not leading to anything beyond it. The dogmatic mode of expression of each, hardly without any exception, is clearly expressive of an exclusive mental attitude. This exclusive mental attitude, this obstinate adherence to one's own standpoint, or this latent prejudice against all other views that are not claimed as one's own, is at the root of the great conflict of ideas (*kalaha-vivāda*), which produced a mighty convulsion in the life of Indian philosophy just at the time of the rise of Buddhism. All those portions that may be regarded as the oldest of the Pali canon vividly portray a picture of this conflict or turmoil, and no less that of preoccupation of the Buddha's thought with it.[26]

RESOLUTION OF CONFLICTING VIEWS THROUGH SAMMĀ AND MAJJHA

Now, wherein lies, according to *Buddha-vacana*, the key to the solution of this problem arising from the conflict of views and opinions which, as they are advocated, appear to be mutually contrary or contradictory? The characteristic language of advocacy of each dogma or creed, as pointed out in the *Udāna*[27] and other Pali texts, is: *Idam eva saccaṁ, mogham aññam* (What I affirm or assert is the only thing which is correct and tenable, and everything else is incorrect and untenable). Each of such assertions betrays an exclusive spirit of thought. A dogmatic assertion touches only one side of truth and implies only a partial view of reality (*ekaṅga-dassana*).[28] The action of this class of people is to be compared to that of a number of persons born blind who try severally to have an idea of the bodily form of an elephant, each describing the animal in terms of the likeness of a particular limb or part felt by the hand, instead of having a view of the animal's body as a whole.[29]

The imperfection of each dogmatic view lies in its incompleteness or one-sidedness—the limited character of the procession of thought of which it is the outcome. Amid the conflict of these views, one has to

[26] *Suttanipāta*, *Aṭṭhakavagga*: *Kalaha-vivāda-Sutta*, *Cūlaviyūha-Sutta*, *Mahāviyūha-Sutta*; *Dīgha*: *Brahmajāla-Sutta*, *Sāmaññaphala-Sutta*, etc.
[27] Pp. 66-69.
[28] *Ibid.*, p. 69.
[29] *Ibid.*, pp. 67-69.

choose between these four logical alternatives: (1) position; (2) counter-position; (3) juxtaposition; and (4) total negation. To put them in another form, the alternatives are: (1) affirmation; (2) contradiction; (3) half-hearted compromise; and (4) evasion of all issues.[30] Emphatically to assert is not to establish the truth. To meet an adversary, or to answer him, is not to decry his position. To evaluate all views eclectically is not to advance the cause of thought. And to cast doubt on the certainty of all assertions is only to make confusion worse confounded, which can never be the way of enlightenment.

To make all of them significant, without undervaluing any, is to take up one's stand on a transcendental position, viewed from which each dogma will appear as a limited procession of thought, traversing a certain ground of knowledge and experience. Examining and ascertaining the genesis of each, understanding how they represent different gradations of approaches of thought, the data on which it is based, and the purpose which it fulfils, one discovers the way of *sammā* or completing process of thought. This process can be carried out by balancing up all statements of truth and centralizing all thoughts that appear at first sight so widely divergent. Thus *sammā* is essentially the way of bringing all thoughts to a focus, and the point at which all of them are focussed or centralized is *majjha* (*madhya*). Thus the real solution of the problem arising from the conflict of thoughts as well as of actions lies in the capacity to centralize them—to fulfil the *majjha*.[31] In the Saṅgha formulation of the doctrine, both *sammā* and *majjha* are employed as adjectives,[32] while in the Buddha's terminology they are substantives.[33] Historically viewed, the rise of Early Buddhism means the final evolution of the way of *sammā* and the fulfilment of the ideal of *majjha*. *Majjha* is indeed the key-word of the entire system of Early Buddhism. It is indeed *majjha* or the central point, the farthest logical reach, that afforded a direction to the centuries of thought evolution, religious evolution, moral evolution, and cultural evolution in India.[34]

[30] *Majjhima, Aggī Vacchagotta* and other Suttas. Particularly for the evasion of all issues, note the doctrine of Sañjaya Belaṭṭhiputta in the *Dīgha*, I. p. 58.

[31] *Aśoka's S.R.E.*: *Majjhaṁ paṭipādayema.*

[32] See *Dhammacakka-pavattana-Sutta*, in which *sammā* is used as an adjective in such terms as *sammā-diṭṭhi*, *sammā-saṅkappa*, and the rest, and *majjhimā* as an adjective to *paṭipadā*.

[33] *Saṁyutta*, II. pp. 17, 20, 23, 61, 76; III. p. 135. Cf. Barua, *A History of Pre-Buddhistic Indian Philosophy*, p. 406.

[34] Following the lead given by Mrs. Rhys Davids, some of the English and Continental scholars have started talking about pre-canonical Buddhism without any reference to the Buddha, which is like speaking of the Play of Hamlet without the Prince of Denmark in it. One may freely concede that all that is attributed to the Buddha in the extant Pali canon is not precisely the word of the Buddha. But it becomes intolerable when, rejecting the whole of the tradition, Mrs. Rhys Davids ventures to say a number of things that the Buddha would simply blush to claim as his own.

27

SCHOOLS AND SECTS OF BUDDHISM

I

CAUSES WHICH LED TO DIFFERENT GROUPS

DURING the lifetime of Gautama Buddha himself, there were indications of the existence of some who would not accept his leadership or obey his instructions. Devadatta, his cousin, was jealous of him, when the Buddha became a great leader of a religious Order, tried to discredit him, and ultimately became his personal enemy. Similarly, there were always a few persons who tried to circumvent the rules made by the Buddha. Upananda and the Ṣaḍvargikas (Pali: Chabbaggiyas) were examples of this type. They sought opportunities either to bypass the Law or circumvent the rules with the result that the whole spirit behind the framing of a certain rule was violated. There was also a tendency among some thoughtless youth to break a rule simply for the mischievous delight it afforded them. That is why the Buddha refused Śāriputra's request[1] to lay down beforehand any rules, until and unless there was actually an occasion for it. When the First Rehearsal (*saṅgīti*) of the Buddhist texts was made under the presidency of Mahākāśyapa, soon after the death of the Buddha, we are told, there were some dissident aged monks like Purāṇa[2] and Gavāmpati,[3] who preferred to remain aloof from the Rehearsal, holding that it did not accord with what they heard from the Buddha. Thus it is evident that there were people who did not co-operate with the Buddha during his lifetime, and with his favourite disciples like Mahākāśyapa, Upāli, and Ānanda, after his death.

Added to this, after the death of the Buddha, there was no central figure who could be considered the Head of the Buddhist fraternity and who could command respect or enforce discipline in the Order of the Buddhist monks. The Buddha refused to appoint any person as the Head, and said, on the contrary, that his Dharma itself could be the Instructor of the Order after his death.[4] Naturally, then, different considerations led people into the formation of different groups—either because of a common interest due to the same region of residence; or because of a

[1] *Sikkhāpada-paññatti-yācana-paṭikkhepo, Visuddhi-magga* (Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, 1940), I. 98; see *Vinaya Piṭaka* (P.T.S.), III. pp. 9-10.

[2] *Susaṅgit'āvuso therehi dhammo ca vinayo ca, api ca yath'eva mayā Bhagavato sammukhā sutaṁ sammukhā paṭiggahitaṁ tath'evāhaṁ dhāressāmīti—Vinaya Piṭaka*, II. p. 290.

[3] See Obermiller, *History of Buddhism* (1931-32), pp. 73-76.

[4] *So (Dhammo ca Vinayo ca) vo mama accayena satthā, Dīgha Nikāya* (P.T.S.), II. p. 154.

common discipleship of a teacher; or because of a common interest in a particular branch of study, like the Sūtra, Vinaya, and Abhidharma, or even in the narrow sphere of a Nikāya, like *Dīgha-bhāṇaka* or *Majjhima-bhāṇaka*.

The Buddha did not attach importance so much to the letter as to the spirit of the Law. Hence he considered the mental attitude of a disciple to a prescribed rule as more significant than its external observance. He did not mind a disciple failing to attend to minor rules of conduct,[5] provided his mental attitude to the general discipline remained sound. Nor did he like to enforce on his disciples any unnecessary hardship, such as staying under a tree even in the rainy season, or prohibit the acceptance of invitations for food from faithful adherents. Human tendency being what it is, there are always people who associate saintliness with a life of austerities; and hence we find that though the Buddha had himself given up a life of hard penance and severe austerities, he had to provide for the class of people who believed in austerities by allowing them the latitude to practise milder forms of austerities known as *dhūtāṅgas* or *dhūta-guṇas* (practices or virtues of purity). Attention, more than due, to such minor practices, and the tendency to glorify or deify the Buddha, also led to the formation of separate groups.

During the century that followed the death of the Buddha, these centrifugal tendencies grew among the disciples. Common interests created bonds of personal attachment or attachment to certain groups with the result that they were often misled by personal likes and dislikes (*chanda* and *dveṣa*), or fear and delusion (*bhaya* and *moha*). A wide gap was separating the sincere disciples of the Buddha from many young recruits who had perhaps joined the Order with no more nobler motives than an easy and comfortable life.

THE FIRST SCHISM

A hundred years (according to a Tibetan source,[6] a hundred and ten years) after the death of the Buddha, matters came to a head and a large number of Vṛjin (Pali: Vajji) monks from the eastern regions like Vaiśālī began to advocate, in the reign of a king, Kālāśoka by name, some ten points,[7] which were, according to the orthodox monks, opposed to

[5] *Khuddānukhuddakāni sikkhāpadāni*, *Dīgha Nikāya*, II. p. 154; *The Milindapañho* (The Royal Asiatic Society, London, 1928), p. 142.

[6] Obermiller, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

[7] These were: (1) that it was permissible to store salt in a horn; (2) that food may be taken even up to the time when the sun has passed the meridian line and the shadow has fallen eastward to the extent of two fingers; (3) that it may be permitted to eat again in another village to which one may go, after having eaten earlier in one's village of residence; (4) that it may be possible to hold separate meetings in each place of residence within one

the rules of Vinaya. The monks from the western regions like Pāvā, Kauśāmbī, and Avanti disapproved these practices and brought this matter before a meeting of 700 monks under the presidency of Revata. The ten points for discussion were interpreted differently by different scholars. As the matter could not be decided in the open meeting, they ultimately left it to be decided by a Select Committee on which each side was represented by four members. These members finally decided the matter against the Vṛjin monks, who, however, did not accept the verdict. Thus a very large body of monks seceded from the original group and styled themselves the Mahāsaṅghikas, members of a great group, which perhaps claimed superiority in numbers or in its keenness in reforming the existing state of affairs and improving upon the conservative attitude exhibited by the orthodox group of monks, who came to be called Sthaviravādins or Theravādins, from *sthavira* or *thera,* which, in Pali, means the old or senior.

According to another source found in the Chinese or Tibetan translations of Vasumitra, Bhavya, and Vinītadeva, the split arose in the Buddhist Saṅgha on account of certain propositions advocated by a monk named Mahādeva. His propositions, five in number, were that the *arhats* are subject to (1) temptation; (2) ignorance; (3) doubt; (4) that the Arhathood is attained through others' help; and (5) that the *arhats* attain the 'Path' with an exclamation of astonishment like '*aho!*'.

The Mahāsaṅghikas held their own council separately in which they made their own recension of the sacred literature, from which the first six books of Abhidharma and portions from the Sūtra and Vinaya of the Sthaviravādins, as well as their Paṭisambhidā, Niddesa, and the Jātaka, in part, were excluded.[8] Thus a split in the Buddhist fraternity was now an accomplished fact.

FURTHER SUBDIVISIONS

Once the unity and solidarity of the Buddhist Saṅgha was broken, there set in the process of further subdivisions. During the second and third centuries after the death of the Buddha, new subdivisions gradually came into being, with the result that as many as eighteen sects appeared out of the original two groups (Sthaviravādins and Mahāsaṅghikas) by the time of the Third Rehearsal, which took place, according to the Pali tradi-

and the same parish limit; (5) that it may be possible to pass a certain proposal in anticipation of the consent of the absent members; (6) that a certain practice, if followed by the senior teachers, may be considered to be a valid justification for others to follow; (7) that milk which has just begun to turn, but has not yet changed into curds, may be allowed; (8) that fresh unfermented liquors may be allowed; (9) that a seat without fringes may be allowed; and (10) that gold and silver may be accepted.

[8] *Dīpavaṁsa*, V. pp. 32 ff.

tion, at Pāṭalìputra (Patna) in the reign of Aśoka, just 236 years after the death of the Buddha, or according to the record of another school, the Sarvāstivādins, at Jālandhara (Jullundur) in the reign of Kaniṣka (variously put between the third and the fifth century after the Buddha's death), who became a patron king of the group that spread far and wide in northern India. The following table, based on the information supplied by Yuan Chwang's translation of Vasumitra's book on 'Eighteen Sects', indicates the emergence of the different sects and *the approximate century after the Buddha's death* in which they arose:

The Mahāsaṅghikas

Second century	Also second century	End of second century
(1) Eka-vyavahārikas (? or rather Eka-vyāhārikas) (2) Lokottaravādins (3) Kukkuṭikas	(4) Bahuśrutīyas (5) Prajñapativādins	(6) Caitya-śailas (7) Apara-śailas (8) Uttara-śailas

The Sthaviravādins (split up in and after the third century)

(1) Came to be later identified with Haimavatas		(2) Sarvāstivādins (third century)	
(3) Vātsīputrīyas (third century)	(8) Mahīśāsakas (third century) (9) Dharmaguptikas (third century)	(10) Kāśyapīyas, also called Suvarṣakas (end of third century)	(11) Sautrāntikas[10] or Saṅkrāntivādins (beginning of fourth century)
(4) Dharmottarīyas	(5) Bhadrayānikas	(6) Sammatīyas (Sāmmitīyas)	(7) Ṣaṇṇāgarikas[9]

The other two Chinese versions of Vasumitra's work and the Tibetan translations of four other works by Bhavya,[11] Vinītadeva, Śākyaprabha, and Padmākaraghoṣa,[12] unfortunately, do not agree in several details, and it becomes difficult to arrive at any definite conclusion as to the origination of different sects from one another.

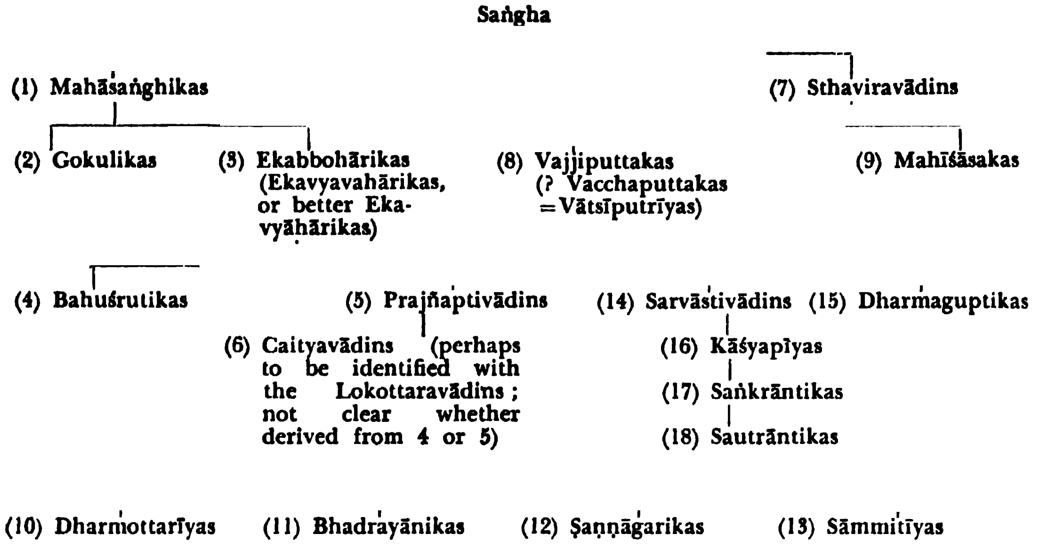
[9] Also variously spelt as Chandagārikas, Chandāgārikas, and Channāgārikas. It is really not clear now what the original name was and what it meant. The term 'Channāgārika' (Channa+agārika), supported by Nanjio, 1285, may be explained as the 'sect living in a closed residence'. Two of the Chinese versions (Nanjio, 1284, 1286) suggest the name as 'Channa-girika' (living on a mountain covered with dense forest), and this would come closer to this Pali term. The other Pali term 'Channāgarika' (the six towners), corresponding to Ṣaṇṇāgarika in Sanskrit, may have been a mere corruption from Channāgārika.

[10] Y. Sogen, in his *Systems of Buddhist Thought* (Calcutta University, 1912), does not consider them to be derived from the Sarvāstivādins, but as a branch of the Sthaviravādins.

[11] Author of a commentary on Nāgārjuna; also author of *Tarkajvālā*.

[12] See Obermiller, *op. cit.*, II. pp. 4, 96-101.

According to the Commentary on the *Kathāvatthu,* based on the earlier account in the *Dīpavaṁsa,* the origin of the Buddhist sects from the original Saṅgha is as given below:



Pali sources mention six other sects—the Haimavatikas, Rājagirikas, Siddhatthikas, Pubbaseliyas, Aparaseliyas, and Vājiriyas.

Of these different sects, some became important in course of time and had a large following and a literature peculiar to their schools. The Mahāsaṅghikas had their own Vinaya, and besides, they were the precursors of what later came to be called the Mahāyānists, who had two subdivisions—the Mādhyamikas and Yogācāras—with extensive literatures of their own. The Sthaviravādins and the Sarvāstivādins, further giving rise to the Mūla-sarvāstivādins, Haimavatas, Mahīśāsakas, Dharmaguptikas, and Kāśyapīyas, had their own literatures of Vinaya, Sūtras, and Abhidharma. The later Brāhmaṇical literature speaks of the Vaibhāṣikas, who were considered to be the continuators[13] of the earlier Sarvāstivādins. They relied more upon the Abhidharma literature as opposed to their rivals, the Sautrāntikas, who relied merely upon the Sūtras and considered Abhidharma as no word of the Master.[14] The Sanmatīyas, or as the Sanskrit text of the Commentary on *Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya* writes, the Sāmmitīyas, had apparently their own literature, but, unfortunately, only a very small fragment in the form of a philosophical work called *Sāmmitīya-nikāya-śāstra* has been left in its Chinese version (Nanjio, 1272).

[13] Stcherbatsky, *Conception of Nirvāṇa* (Leningrad, 1927), pp. 22-23.
[14] Y. Sogen, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

Besides the sects mentioned above, the *Kathāvatthu*-commentary makes mention of Rājagirikas and Siddhārthikas (Pali: Siddhatthikas), which, along with Pūrva-śailikas and Apara-śailikas, are included under Āndhrakas (Pali: Andhakas). There are also references to the views of Uttarāpathakas and Vetulyakas (who may be identified with Vaipulyakas, Vaipulya being one of the divisions of Mahāyāna literature), who are also called Mahāśūnyatāvādins and Hetuvādins.

The *Kathāvatthu* merely mentions the different views held by one or more *individual* members of one and the same Saṅgha and the *Kathāvatthu*-commentary identifies those views with those of the different sects that had already come into existence by the time of the composition of that commentary. Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar,[15] on the evidence of the versions of Aśoka's pillar edicts about the schism in the Buddhist Saṅgha, and Dr. B. M. Barua believe that these sects will have to be relegated to post-Aśokan period.[16]

MEDIA OF PREACHING

A very important information has been conveyed to us by Padmākaraghoṣa, the author of *Varṣāgra-pṛcchā,* as to the medium of preaching adopted by these different schools in course of time.[17] We know, for instance, that the Buddha had permitted his followers to use their own speech for the purpose of instruction or preaching.[18] So, according to the needs of the people of the various regions to which the Buddha's teaching had spread, the languages used were different. The Sarvāstivādins, with some of their subgroups, adopted Sanskrit as their language, as the people of the north-western regions of India were more conversant with the same. The Mahāsaṅghikas, who formed a greater part of the Saṅgha, adopted Prakrit as their language, perhaps because in the eastern regions (Magadha and Aṅga) where they dominated that language was more common. The Sāmmitīyas, who are often associated with Vātsīputrīyas, used Apabhraṁśa which was understood in the Vatsa country. The Sthaviravādins spoke an 'intermediate' dialect. It is also added that, according to some, the language of the Mahāsaṅghikas was an 'intermediate' dialect, that of the Sāmmitīyas Prakrit, and that of the Sthaviras Apabhraṁśa. Both these conflicting sources, however, agree on Sanskrit being the medium adopted by the Sarvāstivādins. The use of Sanskrit by this school gradually must have influenced, in course of time, the succeeding groups of the Mahāsaṅghikas with the result that all the Mahāyānist works are now in Sanskrit.

[15] *Aśoka* (Revised Edition, Calcutta, 1932), p. 100.
[16] *Aśoka and His Inscriptions* (New Age Publishers, 1955), I. pp. 333 ff.
[17] See Obermiller, *op. cit.*, pp. 99-100.
[18] *Vinaya Piṭaka*, II. 139.

I. THE STHAVIRAVĀDINS

The earliest and, at the same time, a vivid and simple picture of the personality of the Buddha and his teachings is found in the Pali literature of the Theravādins or Sthaviravādins. There are also in this literature descriptions of the Buddha in glowing terms as god of gods (*devātideva*), or the teacher of gods and men (*sabbadevamanussānaṁ Buddho Bhagavā*), or as a superhuman being possessing and exhibiting miraculous powers and capable of being a world-teacher; but the more common description in it is that of a human being with concomitant disabilities and frailties. He was subject to human weaknesses when he said to one of his disciples 'my back is paining'.[19] In another place,[20] we find him getting cross with his monks, when he finds them making noise like the fishermen in a fish-market. He is described as the son of a feudal chief, brought up as a fondled child, in a most luxurious fashion, amidst enjoyable surroundings.

Side by side with the description of what appears to be a very unnatural circumstance of seeing, for the first time at the age of twentynine, the sight of an old man, a diseased man, a dead man, and a recluse—the sight which makes him feel disgusted with the world and accept the houseless state—, there is also the account of what appears to be the most natural and real reason of what impelled him to leave the worldly life.[21] After his enlightenment, he lived the life of a great teacher of a religion for forty-five years, during which period he tried to regulate the conduct of his followers according to his own light, and then, as a result of a very natural disease, died a perfectly normal death, though here, too, there is no lack of superhuman element in its description.

The Buddha's teaching (Dhamma) also is very simple and ethical: 'to abstain from evil, to accumulate what is good, and to purify one's mind'.[22] He laid emphasis on living a life of good conduct (*śīla*), attaining concentration to secure the balanced state of mind (*samādhi*), and cultivating insight (*prajñā*) by the understanding of the Four Noble Truths (Suffering, the Origin of Suffering, the Cessation of Suffering, and the Way leading to the Cessation of Suffering) and the practice of the Noble Eightfold Path. This Path he always called the 'Middle Path' as it avoided both the extremes of self-indulgence and self-mortification. He believed in the doctrines of Karma and Rebirth.[23] He, however, was averse to metaphysi-

[19] *'Piṭṭhi me āgilāyati'*, *Majjhima Nikāya*, *Sekha-Sutta*.

[20] *Majjhima Nikāya*, *Cātumā-Sutta*.

[21] *Suttanipāta*, verse 936: *Aññamaññehi vyāruddhe disvā maṁ bhayam āvisi* (Seeing the people in conflict with one another, fear overcame me). Cf. also *Ariya-pariyesana-Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya*.

[22] *Dhammapada*, 183.

[23] This is denied by J. G. Jennings in his *Vedantic Buddhism of the Buddha* (Oxford University Press, 1947. Introduction, pp. xxiv, xxxvi-liv). He describes them to be the Hinduizing elements introduced later in Buddhism.

cal speculation, for instance, about the origin or end of this universe. There are ten questions which are left unexplained or questions which are set aside (*ṭhapetabbā*): whether the universe is (1) eternal or (2) non-eternal, (3) finite or (4) infinite; whether life and body are (5) the same or (6) different; whether a *tathāgata* (7) exists or (8) does not exist after death; or whether (9) he both exists and does not exist after death; or whether (10) he does not exist, or not that he does not exist after death. These questions are unexplained because they are not of any use or benefit for a holy life, nor are they calculated to lead to detachment from the world, to a dispassionate state of mind, to cessation, or to *nirvāṇa*. One will die before one gets definite answers to these questions, just as a man who is wounded by a poisonous dart would die if he were to insist that he would not allow the surgeon standing by to operate upon him until and unless he knew the height, colour, and caste of the person who shot the dart.[24] By the discipline of Conduct, Concentration, and Insight, it is possible for a person to bring about the destruction of all impurities and reach the state of Arhathood (sainthood). Thus he will attain the perfect state of *nirvāṇa* and will not be born again.

The Buddha's philosophy, too, was very simple, and it may be summed up in three words: *anātman, anitya,* and *duḥkha.* There is no such thing as a person, or a living being, an ego, or a living entity, which may be called a permanent soul. The notion of Ātman is a mere convention. Except *nirvāṇa,* which is uncompounded (*a-saṁskṛta*), all things are evanescent (*anitya*), and so are painful (*duḥkha*) and devoid of any everlasting substance. What we conventionally call a person or an individual consists of nothing else but *nāma* (non-material part) and *rūpa* (material form), both of which are changing every moment. This *nāma-rūpa* is the same as the five elements (*pañca skandhas*): material form (*rūpa*), sensation (*vedanā*), perception (*saṁjñā*), conformations (*saṁskāras*), and consciousness (*vijñāna*). Just as one has to fully understand these five elements within an individual, so also one has to understand the twelve *āyatanas,* i.e. the six internal organs—eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind (which also is considered in Buddhism as an organ like the other five)—and the corresponding six objects, namely, form, sound, smell, taste, touch, and what is technically called *dharmāyatana,* which is the corresponding object of mind (*vijñāna*). In addition, one must have a knowledge of the eighteen *dhātus,* which consist of the twelve elements mentioned above and the six corresponding conscious elements (connected with each of the six organs), namely, the elements of eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, nose-conscious-

[24] *Majjhima Nikāya, Cūla-Māluṅkya-Sutta.*

ness, tongue-consciousness, body-consciousness, and mind-consciousness (*mano-vijñāna*).

Thus it will be seen that the number of elements into which the universe is analysed has risen from two and five to twelve and eighteen. This pluralistic conception of the different elements in the universe held by the Sthaviravādins has been further enlarged in the allied school of the Sarvāstivādins.

According to the *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha*, a Buddhist manual of the psycho-ethical philosophy of the Theravāda (written by Anuruddhācārya, a Ceylonese monk believed to have lived between the eighth and twelfth centuries A.D.), the categories in their ultimate reality are four: consciousness, mental properties, physical or material qualities, and *nirvāṇa*.[25] Consciousness (*citta*), in all the fourfold types into which the universe is divided by the Buddhists,[26] is of eighty-nine kinds; the mental properties (*caitasikas*) are of fifty-two kinds; the physical qualities (*rūpa*) are of twenty-eight kinds; and *nirvāṇa*, which is a happy state of dispassionateness, free from all evil depravities, is a state which surpasses all description.

The cycle of worldly life is explained by the Law of Dependent Origination, *paṭicca-samuppāda* (*pratītya-samutpāda*), which gives, for example, how the three successive births (past, present, and future) of an individual are related to one another. The Buddhists, in common with other faiths of Indian origin, except the Cārvāka system, believe in *karma*, and it is this *karma* which is responsible for the life of an individual or its continuity. *Karma* is threefold—corporeal, verbal, and mental. It is the last which is considered by the Buddhists to be more important than the other two.

Avidyā, ignorance of the Four Noble Truths, in a past life, leads a man to perform activities (*saṁskāras*) in that past life. So these two factors of the past life lead a man to the birth-consciousness (*vijñāna*) of the present life. From that originates name and form (*nāma-rūpa*), the physical and mental equipment of an individual, which would further lead to the six *āyatanas*—the internal organs of sense and mind. When these six *āyatanas* are there, they lead to contact (*sparśa*) with the corresponding objects. Contact further leads to sensation (*vedanā*)—pleasant or unpleasant, or neither pleasant nor unpleasant. These five factors, from *vijñāna* to *vedanā*, are the passive side of the present life, which one cannot escape when *avidyā* and *saṁskāras* of the past life have once led to the present birth.

[25] See the opening stanza, after the salutation-*gāthās*, in that work: *Tattha vuttā-'bhidhammatthā catudhā paramatthato, cittaṁ cetasikaṁ rūpaṁ nibbānaṁ iti sabbathā.*

[26] The realms of desire, of form, of the formless, and the transcendent one.

The stage after *vedanā* is very important, for, it is at that stage that the future of the individual is to be determined, whether he will have a further birth or not. If he exercises no control over his mind and lets hankering (*tṛṣṇā*) arise in him, then he is sure to be reborn. If, on the contrary, he exercises control over himself and takes care to see that no hankering would spring up, there is a chance for him to attain deliverance. This stage therefore is supposed to be a *critical* one in the present life, when every person has to be on his guard, lest the normal course of the origin of hankering should take place. From hankering arises grasping (*upādāna*), and from grasping arises *bhava,* which is explained as *karma-bhava* (i.e. action). These three factors again are the active side in the present life (which correspond to the two factors of the past, *avidyā* and *saṁskāras*) which will bring about the future life. So *bhava* leads to birth (*jāti*) in the next life. And when birth takes place, it is sure to lead to old age, death, bewailing, lamentation, grief, dejection, and tribulations in the life to come. Thus is explained the wheel of life.

This life was believed by the Buddhists to be covering the three planes or realms of existence: (1) the plane of desire (*kāma-bhava*), which included the spheres of lower animals, spirits, denizens of hells, demons, human beings, and certain gods of a lower order; (2) the plane of form (*rūpa-bhava*), which included still higher gods of sixteen kinds, birth among whom was possible with the help of various kinds of trances; and (3) the plane of the formless (*arūpa-bhava*), which included gods of invisible form. An individual moving in this round of life may be found to be moving in any of these three planes.

Then, the question that naturally arises is: If there is no soul that transmigrates from one life to another, how is it that the continuity of one and the same individual is maintained? Is there anything that passes from one life to another?

Karma is a great *force,* and it will continue to be effective as long as the force is not exhausted. If a man has given an order to have a certain thing got done, then even though the man may be dying, the order will take effect and will be executed. So when we see a person dying and his physical body crumbling in this life, the dying consciousness in this life will have, on account of the force of *karma,* as its counterpart in the next life, a fresh consciousness in a fresh body, which will enable the force of *karma* to have its full effect in course of time. As the force of *karma* remains the same, the identity in the two lives is maintained through the physical or mental equipment of that force. This emergence of the new consciousness from the dying consciousness of the past life is explained as the kindling of a fresh candle from an old candle that is dying. The flame

has not migrated from the candle to another and yet the flame of the new candle could not have come into existence without the assistance given by the old candle.[27]

If an individual takes care to see that no *tṛṣṇā* is produced, then by the process of discipline laid down for a man who is on the path of the Buddhist ideal of Arhathood, he brings about such a change in his life that all his normal actions are without any craving, i.e. they are *mere actions* (*kriyā-mātra*), and have no chance of bearing any fruit. There are no fresh actions which will lead to the continuity of his life in future births. His present life will end when the force of his past *karma* exhausts itself, and he will then cease to exist, exactly as fire does when the fuel is exhausted. Where he has gone or what happens to him after death, we do not know. An old text says: 'Just as a flame, blown out by a gust of wind, disappears and surpasses any nomenclature, so does the sage, delivered from his physical and mental equipment, merely set and is beyond any description.'[28]

This is his final *nirvāṇa* or *pari-nirvāṇa,* the *nirvāṇa* where there is left no physical body (*an-upadhiśeṣa-nirvāṇa*). The *nirvāṇa* which an *arhat* attains, while living, by the destruction of all evil, such as passion (*rāga*), ill will (*dveṣa*), and delusion (*moha*), is only *sa-upadhiśeṣa-nirvāṇa,* as there is still left a physical body.

II. THE MAHĪŚĀSAKAS

There were two groups, at different times, called by the same name of Mahīśāsakas, and hence there is a difference between the Pali sources and Vasumitra about the chronological relation of this school with the Sarvāstivādins. The Pali sources put the Mahīśāsakas, along with the Vajjiputtakas. as branching off from the Sthaviravādins, and Sarvāstivādins, branching off from the Mahīśāsakas, along with the Dharmaguptikas. Vasumitra, on the other hand, tells us that the Mahīśāsakas branched off from the Sarvāstivādins, who, according to him, directly branched off from the Sthaviravādins. This is perhaps due to the confusion Vasumitra made between the earlier and later Mahīśāsakas.

The earlier Mahīśāsakas can be traced back to the time of the First Council of Rājagṛha. We have already referred to the senior monk Purāṇa, who stayed at Dakṣiṇāgiri and who would not join the Council of Mahākāśyapa. His followers, it appears, formed a group called Mahīśāsakas. They had their own recital of the Vinaya, in which some seven rules, over which differences arose, were incorporated. The Mahīśāsaka

[27] See *Visuddhi-magga*, XVII. 168.

[28] *Accī yathā vātavegena khitto atthaṁ paleti na upeti saṁkhaṁ, evaṁ munī nāmakāyā vimutto atthaṁ paleti na upeti saṁkhaṁ*—*Suttanipāta* (S. B. E., 1881), verse 1074.

Vinaya gives the second place to Purāṇa, the first being given to Kauṇḍinya. This school also reached Ceylon following the route taken by the Sthaviravādins, i.e. via Kauśāmbī, Avanti, and Vanavāsī in North Canara. An inscription at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa refers to a gift, made by a queen of Vanavāsī, of a pillar and a monastery for the benefit of the monks of the Mahīśāsakas. Fa-hien makes mention of this school existing in Ceylon. In an introductory stanza of the *Jātaka-aṭṭhakathā*, we have the following:

Mahīsāsaka vaṁsamhi sambhūtena nayaññunā,
Buddhadevena ca tathā bhikkhunā suddhabuddhinā.

'(I have been asked to write this book) by a monk, Buddhadeva by name, of pure intellect, born in the traditional line of the Mahīśāsakas, and expert in the traditional methods.'

The tenets of the earlier Mahīśāsakas naturally agree with those of the Sthaviravādins, while those of the later Mahīśāsakas have more in common with those of the Sarvāstivādins.

Like the Sthaviravādins, the earlier Mahīśāsakas believed in the simultaneous penetration into truth. The past and the future, according to them, do not exist, while the present and the *asaṁskṛtas* do exist. The *saṁskāras* perish. There are nine *asaṁskṛta dharmas*: (1) *pratisaṅkhyā-nirodha,* cessation with knowledge; (2) *a-pratisaṅkhyā-nirodha,* cessation without knowledge, i.e. through the natural course of the cessation of the causes; (3) *ākāśa*, space; (4) *āneñjatā*, immovability; (5-7) *kuśaladharma-tathatā*, *akuśaladharma-tathatā*, and *avyākṛtadharma-tathatā*, the *tathatā* of the *dharmas* that are meritorious, demeritorious, and neither meritorious nor demeritorious; (8-9) *mārgāṅga-tathatā* and *pratītya-samutpāda-tathatā*, the *tathatā* of being a factor of the 'Path' and the *tathatā* of the Law of Dependent Origination. This list of nine agrees partially with that of the Mahāsaṅghikas.

The main tenets of this sect are: The *srotāpannas* are subject to retrogression, but the *arhats*, who are not subject to meritorious or demeritorious deeds, are not. No *deva* (god) can lead a holy life. No heretic can gain supernatural powers. There is no *antarābhava*, an intermediate existence between the present life and the life to come. The Saṅgha includes the Buddha, and so a gift given to the former is greatly meritorious, while that given to the Buddha is not so. It is certain that there is nothing that transmigrates from one world to another.

The *Kathāvatthu* refers, among others, to the views of this school, according to which they believed that there cannot be, in worldly matters, the controlling faculties of faith (*śraddhendriya*) and the like (XIX. 8) and that the Noble Path, ordinarily considered to be eightfold, really consists of five

factors only, excluding right speech, right action, and right livelihood, which are non-mental (XX. 5).

It is interesting to note that there is much agreement between Vasumitra and the *Kathāvatthu* along with its commentary regarding the views held by this school.

Strangely enough, the doctrines of the later Mahīśāsakas are opposed to many held by the earlier ones. Like the Sarvāstivādins, they began to believe in the existence of the past and the future and of *antarābhava*. They held that the *skandhas, dhātus,* and *āyatanas* always exist in the form of seeds (*bījas*); that *vitarka* and *vicāra* (initial application and reflection) combine with each other; etc.

III. THE SARVĀSTIVĀDINS

Closely related with the school of Theravāda is the school of the Sarvāstivādins, who, of all the different sects and schools, come nearest to the former. The views which ultimately gave its name to this school that originated in the third century B.C. (i.e. a little before the Third Council of Pāṭaliputra in the reign of Aśoka) seem to go back to the time of the Buddha. The idea '*sabbaṁ atthi*' (all things exist) is found as early as the *Saṁyutta Nikāya* (IV.15).[29] This school and that of the Sthaviravādins are Realists. For them, the external world and its constituent parts, the *dharmas,* have a *real* existence. Therefore this school believes that all things exist, and exist continuously—in the past and the future as well as in the present. The *Kathāvatthu* mentions only a few points as advocated by this school, thus showing that, at the time of the composition of the *Kathāvatthu*, it had not yet much diverged from Sthaviravāda. The *Kathāvatthu*-commentary[30] tells us that this school believed that penetration into truths was gradual, and not simultaneous as held by the Sthaviravādins. This school, along with that of Vajjiputtiyas (? Vātsīputrīyas), Sāmmitīyas, and some of the Mahāsaṅghikas, who raised a revolt against the dominance of the *arhats*, maintained that an *arhat* may fall away from Arhathood.[30]

The greatest authority of this school was Vasubandhu, who wrote his systematic treatise *Abhidharmakośa* based upon the seven original works on Abhidharma, *Jñāna-prasthāna* being the first of them. The Vaibhāṣikas, who came into prominence in later days, were, according to some,[31] the continuators of the Sarvāstivādins, while Yamakami Sogen[32] says that the latter were really a branch of the former. Vasubandhu was a Vaibhāṣika,*

[29] Cf. *Majjhima Nikāya*, I.3.

[30] See S. Z. Aung and Mrs. Rhys Davids, *Points of Controversy* (P.T.S., 1915), xix; I.2; I.6, 7; II.9; XI.6.

[31] Stcherbatsky, *op. cit.*, pp. 22-23.

[32] *Op. cit.*, pp. 102, 113.

* Later he became a prominent Yogācārin.

a term derived from *Vibhāṣā*, a commentary on the original Abhidharma texts, while his commentator Yaśomitra was a Sautrāntika, who relied upon the Sūtras only, denying Abhidharma to be the word of the Master.

Vasumitra, in his account of the 'Eighteen Sects', gives a long list of the different views held by the Sarvāstivādins. The Sthaviravādins in India were gradually losing ground to the Sarvāstivādins, who, on behalf of earlier schools, had mainly to carry on the fight against the powerful Mahāsaṅghikas, who ascribed all kinds of transcendent powers to the *buddhas*. So several of the views ascribed by Vasumitra to this school are to be understood in the light of the views held by the school of the Mahāsaṅghikas or other contemporary schools. This list of Vasumitra also shows what development had taken place in this school since the time of the *Kathāvatthu*, i.e. from the middle of the third century B.C. We can give here only a few very important points.

We have seen above that according to this school the *arhats* may fall away from Arhathood; but, curiously enough, the *srotāpannas*, those that have attained the first stage on the Buddhist path towards the ideal of Arhathood, are not subject to such retrogression. This school also, like the Sthaviravādins, denies, as against the Mahāsaṅghikas, any transcendent power to the *buddhas*. The *buddhas* cannot, they maintain, expound the whole of the doctrine in a single utterance, nor can every *sūtra* of theirs be perfect, nor can every spoken word of theirs be considered an absolute truth (*nītārtha*), as claimed by the Mahāsaṅghikas. Some *sūtras* are admitted to be *a-nītārtha* even by the *buddhas* themselves. Further, as against the views of the Mahāsaṅghikas, they held that in a state of *samādhi* (concentration) one cannot utter a word, nor does one ever die in that state.

Like the Sthaviravādins, they believe that the holy life (*brahmacarya*) is possible even for gods, which is denied by the Mahīśāsakas and the Sāmmitīyas, and that what is conventionally called a *sattva* (being) is nothing more than a continuation of *upādāna* (grasping). *Bodhisattvas* are still ordinary people (*pṛthag-jana*), as fetters (*saṁyojanas*) are not yet destroyed by them. Even *arhats* have still something to learn, and they are not free from the effects of their past actions. They are subject to the law of causation, which is a *saṁskṛta dharma*, and some of their actions can still be meritorious. All the *anuśayas*, i.e. the latent evil tendencies, are *caitasikas*; they are *cittasaṁprayuktas*, i.e. associated with mind. Only in the world of desire and of form, there is certainly an *antarābhava*, an intermediate existence. There is a *vitarka*, initial application of the mind (to an object) which is *anāsrava* (free from depravities), as opposed to the theory of the Mahīśāsakas who believed *vitarka* to be *sāsrava* (full of depravities). Even the heretics can have the five supernatural powers (*ṛddhis*).

There are *laukika-pudgalas* which transmigrate, but this applies to the *saṁskāras* during one's lifetime. There are four transcendental meditations (*lokottara-dhyānas*), a name given to the four fundamental trances or *dhyānas*.

The Sarvāstivādins maintain *nairātmya* (to be devoid of a permanent substance) of an individual, though not of things, which they hold to be real for eternity. Like the Sthaviravādins, the Sarvāstivādins also have the pluralistic theory of the different elements that go to make up the universe. According to them, in addition to the list of the five *skandhas,* twelve *āyatanas,* and eighteen *dhātus,* there are seventy-five elements in this universe divided into two main groups—seventy-two *saṁskṛta* (conditioned or compounded) *dharmas* and three *asaṁskṛta* (uncompounded) *dharmas,* i.e. *ākāśa* (space), *pratisaṅkhyā-nirodha* (cessation through knowledge), and *apratisaṅkhyā-nirodha* (cessation not through knowledge, but through the natural process of the absence of required conditions). The seventy-two *saṁskṛta dharmas* are divided into four groups: *rūpa* (matter) of eleven kinds, including *avijñapti rūpa* ; one *citta* (mind), i.e. unmanifested action in the form of a mental impress ; forty-six *citta-saṁprayukta dharmas* (concomitant mental faculties) ; and fourteen *citta-viprayukta dharmas* (faculties not connected with mind). It will be noticed that this classification differs from the fourfold classification of ultimate categories of the Sthaviravāda school mentioned earlier. There is here this new class of *citta-viprayukta dharmas,* a class of forces which cannot be included among material or mental elements. They are energies, says Yamakami Sogen,[33] which are not always actual but potential, and it must be noted that they cannot be active unless joined with a mental or material basis ; they are quite independent of both of them and hence they are called by a further name: *rūpa-citta-viprayukta-saṁskāra-dharmas.*

These seventy-five elements, though separate from one another, are linked together in the actual world by a system of ten causal relations, six principal (*hetus*) and four subsidiary (*pratyayas*).

Thus, it will be seen that, like the Sthaviravādins, this school also believes that an individual or the universe consists of nothing else but the elements listed under one or the other of the different groups given above, and that they have a twofold constitution, material and mental, the former dominant in the universe, and the latter in an individual. Matter is a combination of the four great elements (*mahābhūtas*)—earth, water, fire, and air. The individual and the universe are subject to a constant change in their external aspects (and not in essential nature), the past determining

[33] *Op. cit.,* p. 159.

the present condition, and the present the future. Thus always creating and always changing, we go on. There is no need of postulating a permanent, changeless being in ourselves; for the unbroken continuity of the present with the past, or of the future with the present, will assure us that there is no loss of identity.[34]

Kaniṣka was the patron-king of this school which flourished in Kashmir and Gandhāra. It was during the reign of this king that a great council was held and a lakh of stanzas were written on each subject—the Sūtra, Vinaya, and Abhidharma. It is said[35] that when the commentaries were written, the king had them inscribed on copperplates and that these were deposited in boxes, which may sometime be discovered buried in some *stūpas*.

This school was also known by the name 'Hetuvādins'.

IV. THE HAIMAVATA SCHOOL

According to Vasumitra, the Haimavata school in the Himalayan regions was the successor of the old Sthaviravāda school. But if we look at the tenets held by it, especially those five points of Mahādeva which created the first split in the Buddhist Saṅgha, it becomes difficult to accept the statement of Vasumitra. Bhavya and Vinītadeva, it is interesting to note, consider this school to be a branch of the Mahāsaṅghikas, while Przyluski actually identifies it with them.[36] This school, like the Sarvāstivādins, denied any special eminence to the *bodhisattvas*, who were considered by them to be no more than common men (*pṛthag-janas*), but unlike the Sarvāstivādins, they would not admit that heretics can get supernatural powers or that the gods can lead the holy life (*brahmacarya*).

V. THE SCHOOL OF VATSIPUTRIYAS

The Vātsīputrīyas, with whom is prominently identified the sub-sect of the Sāmmitīyas,[37] were a group of people who were singled out among the Buddhists on account of their belief in the doctrine of a permanent entity called *pudgala*. Vasubandhu has given, at the end of his *Abhidharmakośa*, a special chapter in which he tries to refute the soul theory of the school of Vātsīputrīyas. They believed that there is no transmigration possible from one life to another without such a *pudgala*. It is neither the same, nor different from the *skandhas*. According to them, some *saṁskāras* exist for some time, while others perish every moment. They agreed with the Sarvās-

[34] See J. Takakusu, *The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy* (University of Hawaii, 1947), p. 72.

[35] On the authority of Yuan Chwang.

[36] See Nalinaksha Dutt, *Early Monastic Buddhism*, II. pp. 169-70.

[37] *'Vātsīputrīyā Ārya-Sāmmitīyāḥ'—Sphuṭārthā* (Japanese Edn.), p. 699, lines 3-6.

tivādins in their belief that even heretics attain the five miraculous powers, and the *arhat* can have a fall from Arhathood. The other sub-sects of this school, namely, Dharmottarīyas, Bhadrayānikas, and Ṣaṇṇāgarikas have their differences merely due to the interpretation of certain lines in a stanza about the *arhat* and his fall, his knowledge and doubts.

On account of the belief of this school in a *pudgala*, the question is often raised whether this school could at all be considered a school of the Buddhists. They rely upon the mere word '*pudgala*', occurring in several passages of the Buddhist Sūtras, in support of their thesis, without noticing the sense or the spirit, just as the use of the word '*attā*' or '*ātmā*' in several Sūtras is taken by some to be an evidence in support of the existence of 'soul'.

Besides, the *Kathāvatthu* ascribes, among others, the following views to the Sāmmitīyas. Gods cannot practise higher life. Even among the gods of the *rūpa*-world, there are the six senses—the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind. There is *antarābhava* and acts of intimation (*vijñapti*) are morally effective. They also believed, like the followers of the Abhidharma, that we must contemplate a stage of a trance between the first and second stages of the followers of the Sūtras wherein *vitarka* only has disappeared and *vicāra* still remains. Like the Mahīśāsakas, they also held that the three factors of the Noble Eightfold Path—right speech, right action, and right livelihood—are material and not mental states.

VI. THE DHARMAGUPTIKAS

The Dharmaguptikas that branched off from the Mahīśāsakas differed from the latter only on a few minor points. They have had, however, their own literature of the Sūtra, Vinaya, and Abhidharma. This school gained popularity in Central Asia and China and its Prātimokṣa was followed in China.

This school had differences with the Mahīśāsakas on some minor points, such as whether gifts should be made to the Saṅgha as a whole, which included the Buddha, or to the Buddha separately. It approved of the latter course, and held that gifts to the *stūpas* were also meritorious, which is denied by the Caitya school of the Āndhrakas. Like the Mahīśāsakas, this school also believed that no heretics can gain the supernatural powers and that an *arhat* is free from passion.

VII. THE KĀŚYAPĪYAS

The Kāśyapīyas, who were called Sthāvarīyas, Saddharmavarṣakas, or Suvarṣakas, differed from the Sarvāstivādins and Dharmaguptikas on some minor points and were allied to the Sthaviravādins. Hence they were

called Sthāvarīyas. The other two names are found to be used in Tibetan sources. Przyluski identifies them with the Haimavatas. This school also claims a literature of its own.

According to this school, the past which has borne fruit has ceased to exist, while the past which has not yet ripened continues to exist. This modifies the position of the Sarvāstivādins, who maintain that even the past and the future exist along with the present.

VIII. THE SAṄKRĀNTIVĀDINS OR SAUTRĀNTIKAS

The Pali sources derive the Saṅkrāntivādins from the Kāśyapīyas and the Sautrāntikas from the Saṅkrāntivādins, while Vasumitra identifies the two names. The Sautrāntikas were considered as opponents of the Vaibhāṣikas, as they relied only upon the Sūtras, denying any authority to the Abhidharma. Vasubandhu, though generally in favour of the Vaibhāṣikas, supports the Sautrāntikas in this view.[38] The Sautrāntikas were also called Dārṣṭāntikas as the views ascribed by the *Vibhāṣā* to the Dārṣṭāntikas are those ascribed by *Abhidharmakośa* to the Sautrāntikas. Kumāralabdha, the author of *Dṛṣṭāntapaṅkti* or *Dṛṣṭāntamālā-śāstra*, was the original teacher of the Dārṣṭāntikas, and lived a hundred years after the death of the Buddha, while Śrīlabdha, the next exponent of the same school, lived four hundred years after the Buddha.

The main teaching of this school, from which it got the name Saṅkrāntivādins, is that the *skandhas*, in their subtle form, transmigrate from one world to another, whereas the Sāmmitīyas maintained that it is the *pudgala* that transmigrates. There are four *mūlāntika-skandhas*, and one *ekarasa-skandha*, the subtle consciousness, which is the origin of the former four. The *paramārtha-pudgala*, which appears to be the same subtle consciousness as the *ekarasa-skandha*, is the substance that is subject to transmigration. This subtle consciousness corresponds to the mind that permeates the whole body, according to the Mahāsaṅghikas. It is the same as *ālaya-vijñāna*, or the store-consciousness, of the Yogācāras. It seems therefore possible that this school took its doctrine of *ekarasa-skandha* from the Mahāsaṅghikas and lent it to the Yogācāra school. This school also believed that every common man has the potentiality of becoming a *buddha*—a doctrine which is the precursor of the Mahāyāna theory that every being has in him the seeds of a *buddha*.

On account of such views, this school is also considered a bridge between the Śrāvakayāna or Hīnayāna on the one hand and the Mahāyāna

[38] N. Dutt, *op. cit.*, II. p. 168.

on the other. The Saṅkrāntivādins were also called Tāmraśāṭīyas, probably on account of their copper-coloured clothes.[39]

IX. THE SATYASIDDHI SCHOOL

There is another school, Satyasiddhi of Harivarman, a native of Central India, who, according to a Chinese source (*San-yin*),[40] lived 890 years after the death of the Buddha. He was the chief disciple of Kumāralabdha, a leader of the Hīnayānists in Kashmir. He is described by some to be a follower of the Bahuśrutīyas, and by others to be a Sautrāntika or a Dharmaguptika. Some also maintain that he adheres to the Hīnayāna doctrine with the help of the Mahāyāna. The Sarvāstivādins maintained the soullessness of an individual (*ātma-nairātmya*), though not of things. Harivarman maintained the *nairātmya* of both, of persons as well as of things (*dharma-nairātmya*), a characteristic of the Mahāyāna. The universe contains eighty-four elements, which also are void of any abiding reality. He advocated the theory of two kinds of truth—conventional truth (*saṁvṛti satya*) and ultimate truth (*paramārtha satya*), and held that Ātman exists conventionally, but not in truth. He accepted the Hīnayānist theory of the *buddha-kāya*, and explained *dharma-kāya* as being fivefold, consisting of conduct (*śīla*), concentration (*samādhi*), wisdom (*prajñā*), deliverance (*vimukti*), and knowledge and insight into deliverance (*vimukti-jñāna-darśana*). He, however, believed in the special powers of the Buddha, such as ten strengths (*balas*), four confidences (*vaiśāradyas*), and the three ways of setting up mindfulness (*smṛtyupasthānas*), and held that the Buddha is never depressed in adverse circumstances, nor does he allow himself to be swayed one way or the other when he is praised or censured. This school contends that the present only is real, while the past and the future have no real existence.

The classification of the universe into the eighty-four elements also is *real* only as a conventional truth, but not as the ultimate truth. From the conventional point of view, there is negativism which denies the existence of matter (*rūpa*), mind (*citta*), mental properties (*caitasika*), *dharmas* which are neither matter nor mind (*citta-viprayukta*), and even of uncreated (*asaṁskṛta*) *dharmas*. From the point of view of supreme truth, there is total nihilism (*sarva-śūnyatā*), abstraction from entity, as against the synthetic or transcendental Void of the Mādhyamikas. Even the consciousness of the Void has to be removed, and this becomes possible when one enters into meditation of Cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*).

[39] *Ibid.*, II. p. 49.
[40] Y. Sogen, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

X. THE VIBHAJYAVĀDINS

Besides the schools enlisted by Vasumitra, we find mentioned elsewhere, other schools. The Vibhajyavādins, according to Pali sources, are identical with the Sthaviravādins, and are credited with the belief in the simultaneous penetration of truths. They maintained, according to Abhidharma sources, the existence of the present elements and of those in the past which have not yet borne fruit. They deny the existence of the future elements and of those in the past that have borne fruit.

There are, however, conflicting statements in different sources about the main division to which this group belonged. Some put the Vibhajyavādins under Mahāsaṅghikas, and a Chinese commentator identifies them with 'the present Prajñaptivādins'.

XI. OTHER MINOR SCHOOLS

The *Abhidharmakośa-vyākhyā* (on I.17 of *Abhidharmakośa*) refers to Tāmraparṇīya Nikāya, a sect from Ceylon, who believed in the existence of the material basis of the heart (*hṛdaya-vastu*) for consciousness. With this may be compared *Visuddhi-magga* (XIV.36, 60) and *Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha* (VI.4.6), which corroborates the same. Other groups from Ceylon such as Jetavanīya, Abhayagirivāsins, and Mahāvihāravāsins are mentioned by Vinītadeva and Padmākaraghoṣa. The last was the orthodox group, while the former two were the groups siding with, or inclined towards, the Mahāyānists.

The *Kathāvatthu* mentions a few other schools. 'Uttarāpathakas' seems to be the general name given to the monks of the north and north-west region covering the Punjab, Kashmir, North-West Frontier Province, Afghanistan, etc. The *Kathāvatthu* ascribes a large number of views to this school, thus showing the wide-spread and heterogeneous nature of this class. Many of these views appear to be verging on those held by the Mahāyānists. They are credited (XIX.5) with the doctrine of 'Suchness' (*tathatā*), a doctrine of the Mahāyānists. They believed in the transcendent nature of the *buddhas*—even their excretion is considered to be fragrant (XVIII.4). The Buddha does not feel pity or *karuṇā* (XVIII.3) as he has no passion (*rāga*). There is one Path only, and not four as claimed by the Sthaviravādins. They agreed with the Sarvāstivādins in the belief that householders can become *arhats.*

The Vetulyakas or the Mahāśūnyatāvādins are also mentioned in the *Kathāvatthu*. They are credited with maintaining that the Buddha never lived as a man on this earth and that the Order (Saṅgha) is also an abstract idea and as such they cannot accept any gifts. Among the views of this sect, we also see seeds of later Vajrayāna, as, for instance, when they main-

tained that sex-relations, with mutual resolve or as a result of compassion, may be carried on by a human pair (including recluses) to set up a worldly life (XXIII.1).

Some Hetuvādins have also been referred to in the *Kathāvatthu*, but we have seen above that this name was also given to the Sarvāstivādins. They are credited with the view that insight is not meant for the men of the world, and that happiness may be passed on to another.

XII. THE MAHĀSAṄGHIKAS, EKA-VYAVAHĀRIKAS, LOKOTTARAVĀDINS, AND KUKKUṬIKAS

It has been already pointed out above that the Mahāsaṅghikas (and the other groups derived from them) seceded, according to Vasumitra, from the original Buddhist Saṅgha on account of the five points of Mahādeva. It is very likely that the superior position of an *arhat* was envied and challenged by these seceders. They believed in the transcendent nature of the *buddhas* and therefore all sorts of superhuman or transcendent powers were attributed to them, such as that their physical form (*rūpa-kāya*), their powers, and their lives are unlimited ; they are quick-witted, and facile in speech while giving answers to questions ; their speech is always perfect ; and they are free from sleep or dream. Greater importance was attached by this school to the *bodhisattvas* than to the *arhats*, as they were considered more helpful to the world than the latter, and were believed to be endowed with miraculous powers.

According to the *Kathāvatthu*, this school believed that the *arhats* are subject to retrogression, while the *srotāpannas* are not. Vasumitra holds exactly the opposite view, which does not seem to be consistent with the five points of Mahādeva, most of which are ascribed to this school even by Vasumitra. It is also claimed that even in a state of *samādhi* one can hear sounds,[41] or utter words,[42] which is quite opposed to the view of the Sthaviravādins, according to whom sound is a hindrance to concentration.[43] There is no *avyākṛta dharma* (indeterminate element), which is opposed to the very fundamental threefold division of the *dharmas*, into good, evil, and indeterminate, made by the Sthaviravādins. There are nine *asaṁskṛta dharmas*: (1) *pratisaṅkhyā nirodha* ; (2) *apratisaṅkhyā nirodha* ; (3) *ākāśa* ; (4-7) the four infinities of Space, Consciousness, Nothingness, and neither Perception nor Non-perception ; (8) *pratītya-samutpādāṅgikatva* (being characterized by participation in *pratītya-samutpāda*) ; and (9) *ārya-mārgāṅgikatva* (participation in *ārya-mārga*—the Noble Path). This list differs in

[41] *Kathāvatthu*, XVIII. 8 ascribes this to Pūrva-śailikas among the Andhrakas.
[42] *Ibid.*, II. 5.
[43] *Saddo kaṇṭako samādhissa* (cf. *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, V. 133-35 ; *Visuddhi-magga*, X. 19).

Nos. 4-7 from that of the nine *asaṁskṛta dharmas* according to the Mahīśāsakas. The *dharmas* in the past and the future do not exist. There is no *antarābhava*, an intermediate existence between death in this world and birth in the next.

The Gokulikas of the *Kathāvatthu*, identified with Kukkuṭikas of Vasumitra, believe that the whole world is red-hot (like *kukkuḷa*, i.e. firebrands or live coal) and therefore it is full of misery (II.8). Kukkuṭika is perhaps derived from an equivalent of *kukkuḷa* (II.6). Several of the views ascribed by Vasumitra to this school are found among those ascribed by *Kathāvatthu* to the Āndhrakas, who, it appears, were a powerful section among the Mahāsaṅghikas.

The following tenets are held by some of the members of the group:

Kleśas (corruptions) and *mārgas* (paths) exist side by side. *Karmas* and *vipākas* (fruits) exist at the same time. A seed develops into a sprout. The material constituents of sense-organs are subject to change, while the mind and the mental associates are not. Mind can permeate the whole body, and it is capable of contracting or expanding according to the smallness or largeness of its object. (Here we find a precursor of the *ālaya-vijñāna* of the Yogācāra school). There are sixteen different modes of comprehension corresponding to the sixteen different aspects of the Four Noble Truths.

XIII. THE BAHUŚRUTIYAS, PRAJÑAPTIVĀDINS, AND ĀNDHRAKAS

The Bahuśrutīyas, who are identified with the Bahuliyas[44] of the Pali sources, believed that the teachings of the *buddhas* on five points only, namely, impermanence, void, suffering, absence of any permanent entity, and quietude in *nirvāṇa*, are transcendent, while those on the rest are of the common worldly nature. As regards the rest, they leaned more on the side of the Sarvāstivādins.

The Prajñaptivādins formed another group as if by way of protest against the Bahuśrutīyas. They held that except in the case of the five *skandhas* or the constituents of a being, the *dharmas* have no real existence. The twelve *āyatanas* and the eighteen *dhātus* are temporary or unreal.[45] There is no such thing as untimely death which is the result of the past *karma*. The *ārya-mārga* is to be attained by good *karma*, and not by mere culture. And when once it is attained, it is not to be lost.

'Āndhrakas' was a general name given to the followers of the Mahāsaṅghikas who settled in the Eastern Ghats and around the region of Amarāvatī and Nāgārjunakoṇḍa. Vasumitra mentions three groups: the

[44] The *Mahāvaṁsa* (V. 5) reads 'Bāhulikas'.
[45] See Takakusu, *op. cit.*, p. 118, f.n. 4.

Caitya-śailas, the Apara-śailas, and the Uttara-śailas, while the *Kathāvatthu*-commentary mentions Pubba-seliyas, Apara-seliyas, Rājagirikas, and Siddhatthikas. According to Vasumitra, this school believed that the *bodhisattvas* are not free from evil destiny (*durgati*) and that by making offerings to *stūpas*, one cannot gain great merit. This is opposed to the Dharmaguptika view that gifts to *stūpas* are greatly meritorious.

The *Kathāvatthu* (XV.9) ascribes to the Rājagirikas the view that it is possible for one to die in a state of trance and to Rājagirikas as well as to Siddhatthikas the view that there are no such things as mental properties (*caitasikas*), that gift is a mental state, that an *arhat* cannot have an untimely death, and that the fruit of a wicked action may extend over a whole *kalpa*.

II

All the sects and sub-sects dealt with before belong to Hīnayāna. Some of the sects, however, held views which were partially Mahāyānic and may be looked upon as the precursors of Mahāyāna doctrines. For instance, the Mahāsaṅghikas and the Lokottaravādins deified the Buddha, introduced the *bodhisattva* conception, changed the ideal from Arhathood to Buddhahood, and so forth. Similarly, the Sautrāntika doctrine of the non-existence (*abhāva*) of the gross phenomenal objects of the world, and their characterization as *saṁvṛti* (conventional), brings to our mind the Mahāyānic doctrine of *dharma-śūnyatā* and *saṁvṛti-satya*.

THE ORIGIN OF MAHAYANISM

Mahāyānism had its origin in the early centuries of the Christian era, and the earliest known exponents of its philosophy were Nāgārjuna and Maitreyanātha. On the basis of the statement made by the Buddha, immediately after the attainment of *bodhi*, that he was disinclined to impart the deep philosophical teachings to the people at large, the Mahāyānists claim that they had received their doctrines and philosophy directly from the Teacher, who communicated the subtle and deeper teachings to a select few, the *bodhisattvas*, and the popular ethical teaching to those who were less spiritually advanced, i.e. the *śrāvakas*. The fact is that both Hīnayānism and Mahāyānism derived their views from the identical sayings of the Buddha, and it was the interpretation of those sayings that brought about the gulf of difference.

It is almost impossible to ascertain what the Buddha actually meant by the words '*anitya*' and '*anātman*', and by '*nirvāṇa*' or '*tathāgata*' as beyond the fourfold (*catuṣkoṭika*) logical premiss, viz. the *tathāgata* exists after death; the *tathāgata* does not exist after death; the *tathāgata* both

exists and not exists after death; and, lastly, the *tathāgata* both neither exists nor not exists after death.

As regards *'anitya'* and *'anātman'*, the Hīnayānists satisfied themselves by saying that the elements (five *skandhas* or seventy-two *dharmas*) constituting a being are transitory (*anitya*), and the being so constituted is substance-less (*anātman*), and without individuality. In short, the Hīnayānists denied *'dharma-śūnyatā'* and admitted *'pudgala-śūnyatā'* only. The Mahāyānists understood the word *'anitya'* to mean that the elements are transitory, hence unreal and non-existing (*dharma-śūnyatā*), not to speak of the substancelessness of the being constituted out of the elements; in other words, the Mahāyānists asserted both *'dharma-śūnyatā'* and *'pudgala-śūnyatā'*.

The most puzzling problem posed by the Buddha is that *nirvāṇa* or *tathāgata,* i.e. the Truth, is beyond the fourfold propositions, as stated above. The Hīnayānists simply avoided the issue by saying that *nirvāṇa* or *tathāgata* is *avyākṛta* (not to be discussed). The Mahāyānists, however, took this problem as the most perfect exposition of the Truth. This fourfold statement does not apply either to an absurdity like sky-flower or horns of a hare, but to an Absolute, which has neither origin nor decay, neither both origin and decay, neither both non-origin and non-decay. The Mahāyānists accept the latter alternative and take it as the *śūnyatā* or *vijñaptimātratā,* the ever-existing Reality.

The Mahāyānists consider the solution of the above-mentioned problems by the Hīnayānists as of a lower order, and that therefore their knowledge was of an inferior type; and that by such knowledge (*prajñā*) the Hīnayānists could reach up to Arhathood, a state much lower than Buddhahood. They asserted that a being should realize both *pudgala-śūnyatā* and *dharma-śūnyatā,* and also the oneness (*advayaṃ advaidhīkāram*) of the Truth and the phenomenal world, and thereby attain Buddhahood—an aspiration regarded by the Hīnayānists as impracticable. Those aspiring for Buddhahood are called *bodhisattvas.*

This new point of view led not only to the deification of the Buddha, but to the identification of the Buddha with the Truth, the Reality. The Mahāyānists contend that the Buddha made a show of existence as Siddhārtha Gautama, as the *buddhas,* being identical with *nirvāṇa,* or *śūnyatā,* have no form or body. His body, if any, is the *dharmakāya* or *svabhāvakāya,* the eternal substance. The variegated world is an imaginary superimposition over this *dharmakāya,* and the aim of a Mahāyānist is to realize this fact of superimposition or non-existence of the phenomenal world.

In order to attain this realization, a being has to undergo a long course

of training. Before he starts for the course of training, he has to take the vow of self-sacrifice for the good of others, called the *bodhicitta*. In the Mahāyāna texts like the *Laṅkāvatāra, Daśabhūmika-Sūtra, Sūtrālaṅkāra,* the course of training to be taken by a *bodhisattva* is prescribed in detail. In and through his several existences, a *bodhisattva* first perfects himself in the six *pāramitās,* viz. charity (*dāna*), observance of precepts (*śīla*), perseverance (*kṣānti*), energy (*vīrya*), meditational exercises (*dhyāna*), and knowledge (*prajñā*). He then acquires several other virtues and powers, practises various kinds of meditation, and sharpens his intellectual powers, and thereby gradually advances from one *bhūmi* (stage of spiritual progress) to another till he reaches the tenth *bhūmi,* where he attains *bodhi* (perfect knowledge, realization of the Truth) and becomes a fully enlightened (*samyak sambuddha*) *buddha.*

The *bodhisattva* conception of the Mahāyānists led to the introduction of devotion and worship into the religion, bringing in its train a number of divinities, who were designated as 'Bodhisattvas', e.g. Mañjuśrī, Avalokiteśvara, Vajrapāṇi, Samantabhadra, etc. The belief was that these divine *bodhisattvas* had acquired immense merits, ensuring them the attainment of *bodhi,* but they refrained from reaching the ultimate, because, by becoming a *buddha,* they could no longer exercise *maitrī* (love) and *karuṇā* (compassion) and render service to the suffering world of beings. This type of spiritual doctrine is called Bodhisattvayāna, as distinguished from Buddhayāna or Mahāyāna.

The exposition of Mahāyānism, as given above, is accepted by both the Mahāyānic sects, viz. Mādhyamika and Yogācāra, but it is the latter sect which has detailed the career of a *bodhisattva.*

I. THE MĀDHYAMIKAS

Nāgārjuna is probably the earliest exponent of the Mādhyamika school of thought, though a few Japanese scholars, like Professor Takakusu, hold the opinion that Aśvaghoṣa, the author of the *Śraddhotpāda-Sūtra,* preceded him with the philosophy of *ālaya-vijñāna* (store-consciousness) and the sameness (*tathatā*) of all things of the world, which was later developed by Asaṅga into the Yogācāra system.

Nāgārjuna, the philosopher, was born in a Brāhmaṇa family of Vidarbha, about the first or second century A.D., and was well versed in the Brāhmaṇic *śāstras.* He became a Buddhist monk and was for a long time the abbot of the Nālandā monastery. His commentary on the *Prajñāpāramitā* (*Pañcaviṁśatisāhasrikā*), entitled *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-śāstra,* is a monumental work on Hīnayānic and Mahāyānic lore. The Sanskrit original of this work is lost, but its Chinese translation by Kumāra-

jīva is extant. Recently Professor Lamotte has published the French translation of 30 chapters of this work covering over 1,000 pages. This text reveals the erudition of Nāgārjuna and forms the basis of his *śūnyatā* philosophy. The principal object of the *Prajñāpāramitā* text is to establish that all so-called objects, qualities, attainments—even *nirvāṇa, buddha,* or *bodhisattva*—are non-existent in the highest sense (*paramārtha*), and therefore what an aspirant for realization of the truth of *śūnyatā* should do is to dissociate himself completely from everything worldly, be it the gross worldly pleasures or the highest attainments of an *arhat, bodhisattva,* or *buddha.* A *bodhisattva* is required to fulfil the six *pāramitās* (extreme virtues) by remaining dissociated from the same (*asthānayogena*). He has always to bear in mind that the *dharmas* are neither transitory nor eternal, neither soul nor non-soul, neither pleasant nor unpleasant, neither existing nor non-existing, neither originated-destroyed nor non-originated-non-destroyed, and so forth. In other words, a *bodhisattva* must not grasp at the characteristics (*nimitta*) of a *dharma,* not even of the *prajñāpāramitā.* It is by such complete detachment from worldly objects, spiritual practices, services rendered to beings, and any other conceivable acts or things that a *bodhisattva* can really make spiritual progress.

It has been questioned, Why did the Buddha deliver at all discourses on the spiritual practices and meditational exercises and analyse the phenomenal objects, if they are all mere figments of imagination? Nāgārjuna answers this question by saying that the discourses of the Buddha are dependent on two kinds of truth: one is the worldly conventional truth, and the other is the highest Truth, the Absolute.[46] The conventional truth speaks of the recipient and the received, subject and object; as such, it acts only as a cover of the Truth and is not the Truth in itself. In fact, the Buddha did not preach anything about Reality, as it is undisturbed by origin or decay, purity or impurity, and is beyond all descriptions. Expressing this idea, Nāgārjuna wrote that the Truth is undisturbed (*śivaḥ*) by origin and decay and is the cessation of all conceptions and descriptions. The Buddha never preached any doctrine to anybody.[47]

The Prajñāpāramitā texts harp on the theme that all phenomenal objects are really non-existent (*śūnyāḥ sarva-dharmā niḥsvabhāvayogena*).[48] The only non-illusory Truth is *nirvāṇa*; every other mental impression is

[46] *Dve satye samupāśritya Buddhānāṁ dharmadeśanā,*
Lokasaṁvṛtisatyañca satyañca paramārthataḥ.
—*Madhyamaka-kārikā* (Bibliotheca Buddhica, IV), XXIV.8.

[47] *Sarvopalambhopaśamaḥ prapañcopaśamaḥ śivaḥ,*
Na kvacit kasyacid kaścit dharmo Buddhena deśitaḥ.
—*Ibid.*, XXV.24.

[48] *Aṣṭa-sāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā,* p. 405.

false and illusory.[49] Nāgārjuna reiterates this conception by saying that all illusory objects are false, so the Bhagavān said that all mental constructions are illusory, and hence false. If all are illusory and false, what is there to delude an individual? This has been uttered by Bhagavān to explain *śūnyatā*.[50]

This illusory state of things is not realized by a being enveloped in the darkness of ignorance (*avidyā*), and it is with the cessation of *avidyā* that the possibility of the origin of the mental constructions (*saṁskāras*) ceases. The cessation of *avidyā* can be effected only by meditation and knowledge.[51]

In establishing the Śūnyatā doctrine, i.e. absolute monism, Nāgārjuna takes the two extreme positions: one is that the transitory objects are unreal, and hence false, non-existent; while the other is that the real, the Truth, is eternal, and hence immutable, indestructible, and without origin and decay. He then proceeds to establish that if a real has no origin or decay, the question of cause and effect, etc. does not arise; similarly, if the unreal is non-existent, it has also no use for cause and effect and does not require characterization. He then explains that the phenomenal world, though unreal and non-existent, has an apparent existence. This apparent existence is admitted by the ignorant, just as two moons are seen by one having diseased eyes; with the cure of the disease of ignorance, one visualizes the reality.

After establishing the non-existence of the phenomenal world, Nāgārjuna tries to define his conception of the Truth, *nirvāṇa* or *śūnyatā* in this classical verse:

Aprahīṇam asamprāptam anucchinnam aśāśvatam,
Aniruddham anutpannam etan-nirvāṇam ucyate.

(*Nirvāṇa* is that which is neither to be eschewed nor to be attained; neither is it subject to destruction, nor is it eternal; it has neither origin nor decay.)[52]

[49] *Etaddhi bhikṣavaḥ paramaṁ satyaṁ yaduta amoṣa-dharma nirvāṇam; sarva-saṁskārāśca mṛṣā moṣa-dharmāṇaḥ*—Quoted in *Madhyamaka-vṛtti* (Bib. Bud., IV), pp. 41, 237.

[50] *Tan mṛṣā moṣa-dharmā yad Bhagavān ityabhāṣata,*
Sarve ca moṣa-dharmāṇaḥ saṁskārāstena te mṛṣā.
Tan mṛṣā moṣa-dharmā yad yadi kiṁ tatra muṣyate,
Etad uktaṁ Bhagavatā śūnyatā paridīpakam.
—*Madhyamaka-kārikā*, XIII.1-2.

[51] *Avidyāyāṁ niruddhāyāṁ saṁskārāṇām asambhavaḥ,*
Avidyāyā nirodhastu jñānenāsyaiva bhāvanāt.
—*Ibid.*, XXVI.11.

Cf. *Vinaya Piṭaka* (P.T.S.), I. p. 1: *Avijjāya tve'va asesavirāganirodhā saṅkhāra-nirodho, saṅkhāra-nirodhā viññāṇanirodho*, etc. (complete dissociation from, and termination of, ignorance leads to the cessation of mental impressions, the cessation of which again leads to the termination of mental perceptions).

[52] *Madhyamaka-kārikā*, XXV.3.

Behind Nāgārjuna's extreme negativism, which is, of course, not nihilism, there are also statements that the universe is the Truth, and the Truth is the universe. His view is that the world of existence and *nirvāṇa* are identical,[53] though the two are looked upon as different by the unenlightened. Though Nāgārjuna does not go to the length of making a positive assertion about *nirvāṇa* or *tathāgata*, his commentator Candrakīrti quotes from the *Vajracchedikā* verses, which give a more positive conception about the Buddha or the Reality: 'Those who see my form and follow my words have recourse to wrong exertions and do not see me really. *Buddhas* are to be seen as the universe (*dharmataḥ*); the body of the leaders, i.e. the *buddhas*, consists of universality, which, however, is unknowable and is beyond the possibility of being known';[54] in other words, it is realizable by only the wise one within one's own self. It is one and non-dual (*advayam advaidhīkāram*). It is the unenlightened who do not realize the oneness of the diverse beings and objects of the universe. They are bewildered by the diversity which is in reality non-existent, and their sufferings are due to their establishing a relation between an individual and the objects around it, both of which are unreal, being mere figments of imagination.

Nāgārjuna's followers were divided into two groups known as Svātantrika and Prāsaṅgika, but they did not make any change in the philosophy of Nāgārjuna. They differed only on the method of argument for establishing the truth. One group, headed by Bhāvaviveka, took to the *svātantrika* (direct reasoning) way for arriving at the truth, while the other group, headed by Buddhapālita (fifth century A.D.), took to the *prāsaṅgika* (*reductio ad absurdum*) method and established the truth by negating all that is phenomenal. The latter method is adopted in the *Madhyamaka-kārikā* of Nāgārjuna. Candrakīrti belonged to the Prāsaṅgika school of Buddhapālita.

II. THE YOGĀCĀRAS

Yogācāra is distinguished as a second school of Mahāyāna philosophy; but, in fact, the difference is very subtle, as the Yogācāra conception of *nirvāṇa* or *tathatā* and the non-existence of the phenomenal world is almost similar to that of the Mādhyamikas, and, at times, identical expressions are used to convey these ideas. The earliest work to deal with the doctrine of this school is the *Laṅkāvatāra-Sūtra*, which says:

'The foolish, being deluded, conceive of beginningless false rela-

[53] *Na saṁsārasya nirvāṇāt kiṁ cid asti viśeṣaṇam,*
Na nirvāṇasya saṁsārāt kiṁ cid asti viśeṣaṇam.
—*Ibid.*, XXV.19.

[54] *Madhyamaka-vṛtti*, p. 448.

tions, such as permanent or impermanent, likewise one or both or neither both.'

'Then again, O Mahāmati, *mahāparinirvāṇa* is that which is to be neither eschewed nor to be attained; it is neither eternal nor non-eternal; it is called *nirvāṇa* neither from one standpoint nor from no standpoint.'

'I always preach *śūnyatā* which is permanent but devoid of eternality or non-eternality. The nature of the world of existence is like that of a dream or mirage; it is not to be destroyed by deeds. *Nirvāṇa* is therefore similar to space. The foolish think of *nirodha* as of two kinds, while the wise know it to be uncreated and devoid of existence and non-existence.'[85]

The philosophy of this sect may be treated as a continuation and development of the philosophy of the Sautrāntikas and the Vātsīputrīyas, who maintained the existence of *skandhamātra* and *pudgala*, respectively, as an entity which passes from one existence to another till the final end in *nirvāṇa*.

The earliest exponent of this school of philosophy was Maitreyanātha, who was probably a younger contemporary of Nāgārjuna. His disciple was Asaṅga, who systematized and developed his thoughts; and then Asaṅga's brother Vasubandhu dealt with this philosophy more scientifically.

Unlike the Mādhyamika, this school took a more practical view of things and the limitations of man. The name 'Yogācāra' implies two types of practices: one is the higher, *yoga,* i.e. meditations to raise the mental plane from gross worldly objects to the state in which perception almost ceases to exist (*naivasaṁjñā-nāsaṁjñā* or *saṁjñāvedayitanirodha*) and everything phenomenal appears to be non-existing; and the other is the duties (*ācāra* or *caryā*) to be performed by a *bodhisattva* to fulfil his vow of self-abnegation and service to others. So a Yogācārin *bodhisattva's* task was twofold —to practise meditations to realize *śūnyatā* and to acquire merits by the fulfilment of the six *pāramitās*. All the Yogācāra works deal with these two aspects of the career of a *bodhisattva*.

As stated above, the Yogācārins agree with the Mādhyamikas that the external world is non-existing, the former, however, holding that it is a

[85] *Nityānityaṁ tathaikatvaṁ ubhayaṁ nobhayaṁ tathā,*
Anādidoṣasambandhā bālāḥ kalpanti mohitāḥ.
Punar aparaṁ mahāmate mahāparinirvāṇaṁ aprahīṇa asamprāptito anucchedo aśāśvato naikārthato nānārthato nirvāṇam ucyate.
Deśemi śūnyatā nityaṁ śāśvatocchedavarjitām,
Saṁsāraṁ svapnamāyākhyaṁ na ca karma vinaśyati.
Ākāśam atha nirvāṇaṁ nirodhaṁ dvayam eva ca,
Bālā kalpenty-akṛtakān āryā nāstyastivarjitāḥ.
—*Laṅkāvatāra*, pp. 96, 99, 76.

mere ideation or extension of the *cittamātra* or *vijñānamātra*.[56] Their contention is that the diversified world is the mental creation of a being in whose mind from time immemorial some ideas, desires, and misapprehensions have been stored up. They do not go into the question as to how it began, but simply take a being as he is now. Every being has his own conception of the world and this conception is based on his individual mind, which is the storehouse of impressions collected through his several existences. Hence the diversified world created by him mentally does not exist in reality.[57]

For the purpose of comparison, the writers have sometimes stated that the world is no more than a dream or a sky-flower, but, in fact, the Yogācārins have attributed a certain amount of reality to the mental creations, *vikalpa* or *parikalpita* or *bhrānti*. This *bhrānti* is eternal (*śāśvata*). Though *bhrānti* of one person is different from that of another—the *bhrānti* of a *śrāvaka* is different from that of a *bodhisattva*—one cannot deny the existence of *bhrānti* or *parikalpita*, an apt illustration of which is that the illusion of a wheel of fire created by a whirling torch is seen even by the perfect, a *buddha*. A *bodhisattva*, however advanced he may be spiritually and intellectually, labours under his *bhrānti* up to the last moment before the realization of the Truth. This *bhrānti* or *abhūtaparikalpa* is, in other words, the *saṁsāra*, the phenomenal world. What a *bodhisattva* aspires after is to realize that this *saṁsāra* and *nirvāṇa* (= *śūnyatā*) are identical, and this is also maintained by the Mādhyamikas.

The Yogācārins do not dismiss this *saṁsāra* as absurd and non existent as a barren woman's son but admit it as the snake superimposed on the rope, and attribute a certain amount of reality to the snake so long as the actual identity of the snake and the rope is not discovered Thus, according to the Yogācārins, the misapprehension or wrong ideation exists; it is *sat* (existent) as much as the truth is *sat*; but, ultimately, this misapprehension is realized by the perfect as unreal and is never mistaken by them as reality. The view-point of the Yogācārins about *bhrānti* is not acceptable to the Mādhyamikas as, according to the latter, *bhrānti* can never be *sat*, for in the Mādhyamika system the only *sat* is Reality, which is unchangeable, indestructible, and so forth, and whatever is not that is imaginary and totally non-existent, a mere *saṁvṛti*.

[56] *Udadher yathā taraṅgā hi darpane supine yathā,*
Dṛśyanti yugapat kāle tathā cittam svagocare
(Just as waves are seen on the sea, as figures are seen in a mirror or dream, so do the self created objects of mind appear simultaneously in thought)—*Ibid*, p. 48.

[57] *Yena yena vikalpena yad yad vastu vikalpyate,*
Parikalpita evāsau svabhāvo na sa vidyate.
(Whatever objects are conceived through misconceptions are (in fact) imaginary and have no real existence)—*Triṁśikā*, 20.

The Yogācārins, having admitted *parikalpita-svabhāva* of objects, proceed to its corollary that such objects originate not accidentally but under certain causes and conditions, i.e. these are *paratantra* (interdependent, relative). In effect, they lend partial support to the *pratītya-samutpāda* formula of the Hīnayānists.

The highest truth (*parinispanna*), however, of the Yogācārins is *śūnyatā* equated with *vijñaptimātratā,* which is indescribable, as it is devoid of all characteristics (*lakṣaṇas*). The *parikalpita* and *paratantra* have their characteristics which are evanescent, and if any characteristic is to be attributed to *pariniṣpanna*, it is *tathatā* or *dharmatā* (sameness, same nature, etc.) or oneness (*advaya lakṣaṇa*); and it is this *tathatā* or *dharmatā* that is denoted as *vijñaptimātratā,* as distinguished from *vijñapti* or *vijñāna,* which has the character of grasping objects. When the *vijñāna* ceases to function on its object (*ālambana*) and goes beyond the notion of the received and the recipient (*grāhya-grāhaka*), it is then that it becomes the *vijñaptimātratā,* which is a non-mental (*acitta*) state.

The Yogācārins attributed to the Buddha three kinds of bodies, viz. *nirmāṇakāya, sambhogakāya,* and *dharmakāya,* corresponding to their conception of three forms of truth—*parikalpita, paratantra,* and *pariniṣpanna.* The first *kāya* (body) is apparitional; the second, though apparitional, is caused and conditioned by the accumulated merits of a *bodhisattva*; and the third *kāya* is the real one which is characteristics-less.

III

VAJRAYANA OR TANTRIC BUDDHISM

The belief in *mantras* and mantraic rituals in India can be traced from the time of the *Atharva-Veda*, if not from an earlier period. In early Hīnayāna Buddhist texts, there are repeated warnings against the use of, and belief in, mantraic rituals; but even in these texts there are traces of people taking recourse to protective magical spells (*paritta* or *rakkhā,* in Pali). These magical spells or Dhāraṇīs formed a section of the Mahāsaṅghika texts. In the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya, the *Mahāmāyūrī-dhāraṇī* appears in extenso. Hence, it is evident that, in spite of all attempts of the Buddhist monks to do away with superstitious beliefs, the people at large could not disabuse their minds of belief in the efficacy of *mantras* and mantraic rituals.

In the fifth or sixth century A.D., with the gradual decline of the Buddhist philosophical scholarship, the mantraic literature and the ritualistic worship revived along with the appearance of a number of distinguished Tāntric *sādhakas*, better known as the Siddhas or Siddhācāryas.

The earliest available texts on Tāntric Buddhism are the *Guhyasamāja* and the *Mañjuśrī-mūlakalpa*. The former deals with *yoga* (ordinary meditation) and *anuttarayoga* (Tāntric forms of meditation), and the latter with *mudrās* (finger and bodily poses), *maṇḍalas* (mystic diagrams), *mantras* (mystical- spells), *kriyās* (rites), *caryās* (duties of an officiating priest in worship), *śīla* (observance of moral precepts), *vrata* (vows), *śaucācāra* (cleanliness in acts), *niyama* (religious observances), *homa* (offering of oblations), *japa* (muttering of prayers), and *dhyāna* (meditation). The *Mañjuśrī-mūlakalpa,* in addition to the above, gives directions for painting of the different gods and goddesses of the Tāntric pantheon.

The conception of the Truth or Reality of the Vajrayānists is almost similar to that of the Yogācārins and the Mādhyamikas. According to the Vajrayānists, the phenomenal world is as non-existent as the horns of a hare or the son of a barren woman, but it is spoken of as one speaks of space as an object. The *Guhyasamāja Tantra* says: 'All worldly objects are non-existent and are devoid of objective characteristics. The right means of enlightenment is derived from (the knowledge of) non-existence of worldly objects. There can be neither existence of, nor any conception about, unoriginated objects, existence of which is spoken of as that of space as an object. The real *dharmas* (i.e. truth) are pure and refulgent by nature and are similar to space. The steady way of attaining enlightenment is to avoid any conception about the highest knowledge or its realization.'[58]

From this, it will be observed that according to the Vajrayāna, the phenomenal world is without origin, and hence no question of its existence or non-existence can arise. The Reality, the *guhya* (the secret of all secrets) of the *Guhyasamāja,* is inexpressible, but it is named *bodhi* or *śūnyatā* or *nirvāṇa* as one names absence of any object as *'ākāśa'* ; and, in fact, *bodhi* does not exist, nor can there be its attainment. Apparently, this is a Mādhyamika conception, but the Vajrayānists are inclined to a more positive conception of the Truth. Indrabhūti, a Siddhācārya and a distinguished exponent of the Vajrayāna, argues in his *Jñānasiddhi* (III, IV) that the Truth or Reality has no objectivity but, at the same time, it is not non-existent like the horns of a hare,[59] but such similes are also used by the

[58] *Abhāvāḥ sarvadharmāste dharmalakṣaṇavarjitāḥ,*
Dharmanairātmyasambhūtā idaṁ bodhinayaṁ dṛḍham.
Anutpanneṣu dharmeṣu na bhāvo na ca bhāvanā,
Ākāśapadayogena iti bhāvaḥ pragīyate.
Prakṛtiprabhāsvarā dharmāḥ suviśuddhā nabhaḥ samāḥ,
Na bodhir nābhisamayam idaṁ bodhinayaṁ dṛḍhaṁ.
—Pp. 12-13 (Gaekwad's Oriental Series).

[59] *Śaśaśṛṅgaṁ na tad vetti nāpi vandhyāsutaṁ tathā,*
Abhāvatvāt kathaṁ vetti nirākāram ato bhavet.
'None cares to know what is hare's horn or son of a barren woman ; how can one know objects which are mere absence (of existence) and are without any form'—*Jñānasiddhi* (Gaekwad's Oriental Series), IV.

expositors of *śūnyatā.* He adds that similes are not meant for exact comparison, as when a person is described as the lion among men (*puruṣa-siṁha*), it is not meant that the person has also a tail.

After dismissing *sākāratva* (with form) and *nirākāratva* (formlessness) of *bodhi,* Indrabhūti states that the knowledge realized within one's own self by the perfect is the highest type of happiness, but it must not be confused with the happiness produced by two *indriyas* (senses), allowed to the adepts for their mental happiness and not for the realization of the highest Truth. He terms the highest happiness '*mahāsukha*', which is eternal (*nitya*) ; but a positive conception like this does not appear in the *Guhyasamāja,* and therefore it may be regarded as a later addition.

In the *Guhyasamāja,* there is a graphic account of the phenomenal world, which is shown to be an emanation from the original *tathāgata* or the Reality. The five *skandhas* of the early Buddhists, as also the impurities, like *rāga, dveṣa,* and *moha,* are personified as so many *buddhas,* issuing out of the original *tathāgata,* called '*bodhicitta-vajrastathāgata*'. Hence, the source of all the *buddhas* is the *vajra,* which is identical with *śūnyatā* or the Reality.

This *vajra,* being characteristics-less, is incapable of preaching the Truth or the path leading to the Truth, and therefore from time to time it converts itself into *kāya-vāk-citta-vajra* and delivers the discourses on Vajrayāna. Hence, it is clear that the Vajrayāna maintains the doctrine of *śūnyatā,* with the modification that it is something positive, which Indrabhūti takes as *mahāsukha,* while Anaṅgavajra defines it as *prajñopāya,* the combination of *prajñā* (knowledge) and *upāya* (=*karuṇā,* compassion). They have also incorporated the Yogācāra views about the three *kāyas* (bodies) of the Buddha.[60] The Vajrayānists, like the Mādhyamikas, identify *śūnyatā* or *vajra* with *saṁsāra* (phenomenal world). Such identity is called *samatājñāna* (knowledge of sameness) or *anyonya-vyāpaka-jñāna* (knowledge of co-extensiveness).

The conception of sameness or co-extensiveness of *vajra* and the phenomenal world has, however, done the greatest harm to the cause of the religion. The Mahāyānists instructed their followers to develop this conception through the practice of the four *brahmavihāras,* viz. *maitrī* (love), *karuṇā* (compassion), *muditā* (joy at others' success), and *upekṣā* (equanimity), which are to be exercised over all beings of the world, and are therefore unlimited in scope (*apramāṇa*), whereas the Vajrayānists allowed the adepts to take recourse to all kinds of worldly pleasures and to realize through them the sameness or co-extensiveness of the worldly objects and the *vajra.* The Vajrayāna adepts were taught that excreta, urine, and so

[60] See *Ibid.,* p. 36.

forth are not to be distinguished from any good food; nor any woman, whether a mother or sister or other's wife or a girl of low caste, from an enjoyable woman. But there was the constant warning that an adept must have a long course of training in meditations (*yoga*), and unless and until he perfects himself in such meditation, he must not undertake the higher forms of meditation (*anuttara-yoga*), for which the most repulsive practices are prescribed. As this course of training is beset with the dangers of moral and physical degradation, the Vajrayāna insists that an adept must first secure a suitable *guru* (spiritual preceptor), who must be as spiritually advanced as a *buddha*, and that all his meditational practices must be guided and supervised by the *guru*. Before he takes to meditations, lower or higher, he is to learn the *mudrās*, *maṇḍalas*, *kriyās*, and *caryās* from his *guru*. What actually happened was that neither a suitable *guru* was available nor an adept underwent through the preliminary course of training. Such non-observance of the conditions prescribed in Vajrayāna led to the abuses, which brought about the ruin of a religion with the noblest ideals. There are abuses and non-observance of duties in every religion; but in no religion has the promulgator given scope to such abuses as did the Vajrayānists. Thus one of the purest religions, with the most subtle conception of monism, degenerated into a religion of voluptuousness.

IV

SCHOOLS AND SECTS OUTSIDE INDIA

From the time of Aśoka (*c.* 273-236 B.C.), Buddhism began its outward march, and by the seventh century A.D. had spread to Central Asia, China, Korea, Japan, and Tibet in the North, and Ceylon, Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, Viet-nam, Malaya, and Indonesia in the South. Buddhism adapted itself to the environment and temperament of the people of the countries to which it went, and there gave rise to many sects and schools as in India itself. Excepting Viet-nam, where Mahāyānism prevails, the southern countries are mainly affiliated to Theravāda Buddhism. While in China, Korea, and Japan, the Mahāyāna sects are dominant, in Tibet Tāntric Buddhism holds sway, besides the Mahāyāna. In Central Asia, Malaya, and Indonesia, which came under the sway of Islam, Buddhism has disappeared. Some of the extant principal sects are dealt with here. The sects in Thailand, Cambodia, and Viet-nam are of minor importance, and those of Korea are mostly derived from China, and therefore these are not treated separately.

I. CEYLON

Theriyas (*Theravādins*): Ceylon maintained its orthodox form of Buddhism, Theravāda, up to the present day from its inception by Mahinda (Mahendra) at the time of King Devānaṁ Piyatissa (247-207 B.C.), who built for this school the Mahāvihāra at Anurādhapura. This monastery became a famous repository of the Buddhist (Pali, Sinhalese, and also Āndhra) literature and a rendezvous of monk-scholars and commentators. Its placidity was disturbed occasionally by the monks of its neighbouring Abhayagiri monastery, and it received the severest blow from King Mahāsena in the fourth century A.D., when the monastery was not only denuded of monks for nine years, but was also subjected to heavy damages. Its glory was revived by the large number of its votaries who made King Mahāsena regret for his vandalism. The former prestige of the monastery was restored by this king's son, Siri Meghavaṇṇa, who made amends for the misdeeds of his father, and the monastery continued to be patronized by the succeeding generations of kings.

Dhammarucikas: This sect was brought into existence by a teacher called Dhammaruci, a follower of the Vātsīputrīya (=Vajjiputtaka= Sāmmitīya=Pudgalavāda) sect, which branched off from the Theravādins. It subscribed to all the fundamental principles of Theravāda, with only this deviation that it posited a sixth *khandha*, *pudgala*, arising out of the five *khandhas* and persisting in all existences of a being till its attainment of *nibbāṇa*. This sect dwelt in the Abhayagirivihāra built for, and dedicated to, Thera Mahātissa by King Vaṭṭagamaṇī Abhaya, out of gratitude to Mahātissa, who helped him indirectly in conquering the Tamils. This Vihāra was named after the king.

Jetavanīyas: A section of the Dhammarucikas adopted some of the Mahāyānic views. They occupied the Jetavanavihāra built by King Mahāsena in the compound of the Mahāvihāra. They therefore became known as the Jetavanīyas, and their Mahāyānic leanings are evidenced in the Jetavanārāma Sanskrit Inscription.

Sāgaliyas: Those of the Dhammarucikas, who did not approve of Mahāyānic views, left Abhayagirivihāra under the leadership of Ussiliyā Thera and settled at Dakkhiṇāgiri. They called themselves Sāgaliyas after the name of one of their distinguished leaders.

Vetullavādins (=*Vaitulyakas or Vaipulyakas*): Those of the Dhammarucikas, who stayed back in Abhayagirivihāra, preferred Mahāyāna teachings to those of the Vātsīputrīyas and came to be known as Vetullavādins (Vetulyavādins), who regarded the Buddha as superhuman (*lokottara*) and his

existence in the world as mere appearance for the good of men and beings (*lokānuvartana*). Their early texts were called *Mahāvaipulya-Sūtras*, and consisted of the *Lalitavistara*, the *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka*, etc. In course of time, they developed the philosophic view that the phenomenal objects had only an apparent and not real existence (Suññavāda). The Vetullavādins did not find a congenial soil in Ceylon, though they secured some followers and introduced Mahāyānic images into Ceylon.

The Vetullavādins were suppressed by King Vohārika Tissa (A.D. 269-91). However, after his reign they raised their head, but were again put down by King Goṭhābhaya (A.D. 309-22), who exiled the leading monks of this sect to India. A distinguished monk, Saṅghamitra, possessing occult powers, took up the cause of the exiled monks and tried to re-establish Vetullavāda in Ceylon. He commanded respect of King Goṭhābhaya, who entrusted to him the education of his sons, of whom the younger Mahāsena became his favourite ward. When Mahāsena ascended the throne (A.D. 334-62) he was prevailed upon by Saṅghamitra to suppress the Theriya monks of Mahāvihāra and to support the Abhayagiri monks. After some time Saṅghamitra was killed by the supporters of the Mahāvihāra and King Mahāsena was compelled to change his attitude towards the Mahāvihāra. About two centuries later, King Aggabodhi II (A.D. 601-11) and King Dāṭhopatissa (A.D. 650-58) supported the Abhayagirivāsins. The finds of Mahāyānic images and Sanskrit inscriptions testify to the fact that since the time of King Mahāsena, Mahāyānism penetrated into Ceylon and obtained a few followers.

Vājiriyas: During the reign of King Sena I (A.D. 831-51), a new sect was imported from India into Ceylon. It propagated the mystic doctrines of Vajrayāna, the Tāntric form of Buddhism. The monks of this sect also dwelt at Abhayagirivihāra, which it seems, became the rendezvous of dissident monks, who did not subscribe to the principles of the conservative Theriyas.

The monks of Ceylon were also distinguished as Dhammakathikas, Paṁsukulikas, Araṇyavāsīs and Grāmavāsīs, but these should not be treated as sects, and all these four may be placed under the Theriyas, who recognized the observance of *dhūtaṅga* (ascetic) practices as a part of their spiritual training.

Amarapura Saṅgha: Some Burmese monks, who were at first trained by the Sinhalese monks, were called upon to lay the foundation of a sect in Ceylon in A.D. 1802 during the reign of King Bodawpaya. They started there a pure Saṅgha called Amarapura, in accordance with the basic teachings of the great founder of Buddhism. This Saṅgha sanctioned the admission of

men of all castes to monkhood as against the Sinhalese practice of discrimination by castes. They subscribed to the Pārupana principles.

II. BURMA

It is said that during the reign of Aśoka, two monks, Soṇa and Uttara, were sent by Moggaliputta Tissa to Suvaṇṇabhūmi, which is identified by a few scholars with Burma. In the fourth and fifth centuries A.D., there was very likely an intercommunication between Burma and the south-east coast of India for trade and commerce. In ancient India, the Buddhist missionaries usually accompanied the traders to foreign countries, and so it may be surmised that they went to Burma along with the sea-going traders and preached the religion there. The existence of Aris, who were designated by the orthodox as the Samaṇakuṭṭakas (false recluses) in Upper Burma, was probably due to the introduction of Tāntric Buddhism overland by the monks of Assam and Bengal in the seventh or eighth century A.D. The Aris resided in forests where they carried on their secret practices, in which they included also the ritualistic worship of local gods and spirits. They were probably responsible for the introduction of Mahāyānic images that were discovered in Burma. The religion and practices of the Aris were suppressed in the eleventh century A.D. by King Anawrahta (Anuruddha), who introduced Theravāda Buddhism of Thaton into Upper Burma and entrusted the care of the religion to a young learned Talaing monk Shin Arahan. Four monks were sent to Ceylon by the king at the advice of Shin Arahan to procure correct copies of the Pali Tripiṭaka.

Ariya-arahanta-pakkha (also known as Mramma Saṅgha = Kamboja or Krom fraternity): Uttarājīva, a Talaing monk and a disciple of Panthagu, who was a disciple of Shin Arahan and claimed hierarchical succession from Soṇa and Uttara of Aśoka's days, propagated Theravāda Buddhism in Upper Burma. In the twelfth and subsequent centuries it was distinguished from the Sīhala Saṅgha by the designation 'Mramma Saṅgha'.

Sīhala Saṅgha: Capaṭa was the originator of the Sīhala Saṅgha. He went to Ceylon with Uttarājīva and had himself re-ordained by the Sinhalese monks according to the practice prevailing there. He remained in Ceylon for ten years to study the scriptures. He returned to Burma with four companions: Sivali, Tāmalinda, Ānanda, and Rāhula. They started the Sīhala Saṅgha and claimed hierarchical succession from Mahinda. With the patronage of King Narapatisithu, this Saṅgha prospered to the detriment of the Mramma Saṅgha.

Sub-sects of the Sīhala Saṅgha: Sivali, Tāmalinda, and Ānanda, each started, in the thirteenth century, a Saṅgha of his own, while Rāhula

reverted to household life. The cause of appearance of the sub-sects were minor differences in monastic rules and regulations, two of which were:

(a) permissibility for a monk to receive the gift of an elephant and then to release it in the forest or to give it away to some one else as was done by Ānanda—which was strongly disapproved by others;

(b) indication by words (*vacīviññatti*) by a monk to his lay disciples about his necessity of one or more of the four requisites (*nissayas*) prescribed for a monk—objection was taken to this by Sivali.

All the three sub-sects mentioned above propagated their views in Lower Burma (Krom or Martaban), while two other monks of the Sīhala Saṅgha, Buddhavaṁsa and Mahāsāmī (Mahānāga) started two fresh sub-sects. They claimed greater sanctity on account of their succession from the Mahāvihāra teachers of Ceylon.

It was in the fifteenth century (A.D. 1476-80) that Dhammaceti, who was at first a monk of the Sīhala Saṅgha and then returned to household life to become a king, purified the monastic organizations and united the two Saṅghas, Mramma and Sīhala, giving preference, however, to the principles of the latter. This unity remained undisturbed for the next two centuries (i.e. sixteenth and seventeenth) till a fresh controversy cropped up regarding the method of putting on the upper robe (*cīvara*), and this led to the rise of the two sects: Ekaṁsika and Pārupana.

Ekaṁsika and Pārupana: These two sects carried on their bitter rivalry for about a century. The main point of dispute was whether the upper robe (*cīvara*) should be worn by the monks covering both the shoulders (*pārupana*), or it should cover only one shoulder (*ekaṁsika*), a practice followed by some monks of Siam and Ceylon. The popularity of either of the two sects depended largely on the side taken by the ruling powers at the advice of the royal preceptors. There were also conferences organized by the kings who watched the controversies with keen interest. The Ekaṁsikas were in difficulty in finding authoritative texts endorsing their view, while the Pārupanas, among whom there were many learned monks, referred to a few texts which supported their contention. Ultimately the Pārupanas triumphed in the nineteenth century.

Kosan Sect: It is interesting to note that a section of the Burmese monks regarded the *Abhidhamma* as the only Piṭaka that gave an exposition of the highest Truth (*paramattha = paramat*) but not the other two Piṭakas. This was strongly resented to by the orthodox monks, and it is said that the leader of this sect lost his life. The appearance of this sect in Burma shows that the Sarvāstivādins of India, and the adherents of the Kośa or Kusha school of China and Japan, all of whom took Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa* as their basic text, secured in Burma some followers, who,

however, failed to establish themselves as a sect against the extremely conservative Theravādins.

III. CHINA

The growth and development of the sects in China were more or less interlinked with the Chinese translations of the Buddhist texts and with the efforts of eminent monks to popularize the teachings of these texts. The schools and sects (*tsung*) which appeared in China may be chronologically arranged thus:

SAN-LUN-TSUNG, CH'EN-SHU-TSUNG, AND LÜ-TSUNG

During the reign of the Eastern Tsin Dynasty (A.D. 317-420) the Prajñāpāramitā texts and the works of Nāgārjuna and Asaṅga were translated into Chinese. These led to the appearance of San-lun-tsung or the 'School of Three Treaties', which taught the *śūnyatā* philosophy as propounded in the Mādhyamika system.

The second sect, contemporaneous with the above, was Ch'en-shu or Satyasiddhi of Harivarman, whose views were similar to those of the Sautrāntikas, i.e. the existence of the external world could only be inferred, and not directly perceived. Harivarman carried this view-point further and declared that both the soul and the phenomenal world were non-existent. The teachings of these two sects, being abstruse and philosophical, could not gain popularity among the commoners.

The third sect of this period was Lü or the Vinaya school, which had as its basic text the *Caturvarga Dharmagupta Vinaya* and which regarded the observance of disciplinary rules and monastic regulations as the only means of salvation. Some time later, in about the seventh or eighth century, it was subdivided into three sects, viz. (a) the Southern Hills of Tao-hsuan, who adhered rigidly to the Vinaya rules and formalities; (b) Eastern Stūpa of Huai-su, who subscribed to the Satyasiddhi doctrines, besides observance of the monastic rules; and (c) Hsiang-pu of Fa-lee, who adopted the doctrines of the *Abhidharmakośa*, i.e. Sarvāstivāda views, in addition to the Vinaya observances.

T'IEN-T'AI-TSUNG AND HUA-YEN-TSUNG

With the translation of several Yogācāra works, and particularly of the *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka* and the texts of the Avataṁsaka class, idealistic doctrines found favour with the Chinese monks and scholars, and in consequence appeared the two well known sects T'ien-t'ai and Hua-yen.

T'ien-t'ai: Chih-i (A.D. 531-97) started this sect on the basis of the *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka-Sūtra* (the Lotus of the True Law), according to

which (a) there is no antagonism between Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna, the former being only a step to the latter; (b) that *buddhas* have three bodies, viz. *nirmāṇa* (created), *sambhoga* (refulgent), and *dharma* (cosmic or real); (c) that the phenomenal world is unreal and hence without so-called origination and destruction; (d) that illusory cause and effect make a phenomena appear to exist although it is non-existent; and (e) that cessation of the wrong notion of origin and decay of phenomenal objects leads to the realization of the Truth. This sect was widely welcomed by the Chinese, who dedicated to it a large number of monasteries, which, in course of time, turned into academic centres of repute.

Hua-yen: This sect was founded by Tu-shun, who died about A.D. 640. Its teachings were slightly more advanced than those of the previous one. According to this sect, Buddha Vairocana (= the Sun) represented the *dharmakāya* of all *buddhas*. It adopted the *tathāgatagarbha* conception of the Yogācārins, saying that it had two aspects, one was the pure and eternal, the *tathāgata*-nature, and the other was the impure and temporary, the phenomenal universe, the latter being only a manifestation of the former, like waves on the sea. Essentially, the manifested world is not different from the real, the *tathatā*. It recognized the ten stages through which a *bodhisattva* must pass in order to attain Buddhahood, as explained in the *Daśabhūmika-Sūtra* of the Avataṁsaka class. It attached great importance to another Avataṁsaka text, viz. the *Gaṇḍa-vyūha*, in which is recounted the story of Sudhana approaching different teachers to learn the *bodhisattva-caryā*, which he obtained at last from Samantabhadra Bodhisattva.

CHING-TU-TSUNG AND CH'AN-TSUNG

During the reign of the Western Wei Dynasty (A.D. 535-57) of the North and of the Liang Dynasty (A.D. 502-57) of the South, appeared two sects, viz. Ching-tu and Ch'an, both of which attained so much popularity that they eclipsed the earlier ones.

Ching-tu: The teachings of this sect were based on the *Sukhāvatī-vyūha-Sūtra* and *Amitāyur-dhyāna-Sūtra*. The former was first translated into Chinese in A.D. 148 by the Parthian monk An-shi-kao and the latter by Dharmarakṣa (A.D. 266-313). There were many other translations of these two Sūtras. Hui-Yüan (A.D. 333-418) was the founder of this sect. He was at first a Taoist and then a follower of the San-lun ((Mādhyamika) school and wrote commentaries on the *Mahāsannipāta-Sūtras*. He upheld the belief that Buddha Amitābha, while he was a *bodhisattva*, took the vow (*praṇidhāna*) that he would become a *buddha* only on the condition that, after becoming a *buddha*, he would be able to render service to all beings.

As a result of this *praṇidhāna,* he became the presiding *buddha* of the Sukhāvatī heaven, and that any living being worshipping him with sincere devotion would be reborn in his realm, Sukhāvatī, and enjoy heavenly bliss. He also endorsed the Mahāyānic creed of *pariṇāmana,* i.e. of transference of merit by one person to another. This devotional teaching appealed to the masses, who gradually developed the belief that endless repetition of the formula 'Salutation to Buddha Amitābha' would ensure one re-existence in the Sukhāvatī (Pure Happy Land). Philosophically, it subscribed to the Yogācāra principles. In China it maintained its popularity only up to the ninth century.

Ch'an (*Dhyāna*): This sect owes its origin to Bodhidharma, who went to China from South India in A.D. 520 during the reign of Wu-ti, the first emperor of the Liang Dynasty, a devout benefactor of Buddhism like Emperor Aśoka. Bodhidharma's denunciation of charitable works displeased the emperor. He taught that one should withdraw his mind from everything external, be it a meritorious act, or reading of scriptures, or offering of prayers, and concentrate his attention inwardly in order to realize that he was not different from the Buddha, the Truth. It is the same as the Mādhyamika teaching that *saṁsāra* is identical with *nirvāṇa*; in other words, every person is a *buddha* potentially, but he is not aware of it on account of his *avidyā* (ignorance). The Mādhyamikas recommended acquisition of knowledge (jñāna-mārga) for the removal of *avidyā,* while Bodhidharma preached that meditation (dhyāna-mārga) was the only means for the realization of the truth—the oneness of an individual and the Buddha.

SHE-LUN-TSUNG, FA-HSIANG-TSUNG, CHEN-YEN-TSUNG, AND CHU-SHE-TSUNG

During the reign of the Ch'en Dynasty (A.D. 557-89), the Chinese monk-scholars became more and more interested in Yogācāra doctrines and translated into Chinese the works of Maitreyanātha, Asaṅga, and Vasubandhu, including the masterly treatise of Vasubandhu, the *Abhidharmakośa,* the quintessence of all Abhidharma texts. Along with these, they translated also a few Tāntric texts. As a result of such literary fervour appeared four sects, two being of the Yogācāra group: She-lun (Mahāyāna-samparigraha),[61] and Fa-hsiang (Vijñānamātra); the third was Chen-yen (Mantrayāna); and the fourth, Chu-she (Kośa), the realistic school corresponding to Sarvāstivāda.

She-lun: This sect derived its doctrines from Asaṅga's *Mahāyāna-samparigraha,* translated into Chinese by Paramārtha. In this text, Asaṅga established the superiority of Mahāyāna to Hīnayāna, and explained in detail the Yogācāra concepts, such as: *ālaya-vijñāna* (receptacle of conscious-

[61] Professor Lamotte makes it 'Mahāyāna-saṁgraha' in his French translation of the text.

ness); *parikalpita* (imaginary), *paratantra* (dependent), and *parinispanna* (absolute) forms of the Truth (*jñeya*); the *vijñaptis* (various perceptions); the *bodhisattva* practices like *pāramitās* (six extraordinary attainments); *daśabhūmi* (ten stages of spiritual progress); *śīla* (moral purity), *samādhi* (meditation), and *prajñā* (knowledge of the Truth); and the three bodies of *buddhas*. This text represents the first stage of the Yogācāra school of thought.

Fa-hsiang (*Dharmalakṣaṇa*): Some time later, i.e. in the seventh century A.D., when Hiuen-Tsang returned from India after studying the Yogācāra doctrines with Śīlabhadra and translated a number of Yogācāra texts, including the works of Vasubandhu and their commentaries, an advanced school of Yogācāra came into being. It was better known as Vijñānavāda, according to which the ultimate Reality was *vijñaptimātratā* and the phenomenal objects were unreal and could be designated only by their evanescent characteristics (*lakṣaṇas*). Takakusu writes in his *Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy*[62] that Yogācāra idealism developed in three centres with certain differences in their idealistic conceptions. The centres were: (i) Nālandā, where lived Diṅnāga, Agotra, Dharmapāla, Śīlabhadra, and Hiuen-Tsang; (ii) Valabhī, where dwelt Guṇamati, Sthiramati, and Paramārtha; (iii) China, where Kuei-chi, a disciple of Hiuen-Tsang, developed the Fa-hsiang school of thought.

Chen-yen: This sect owes its origin to two Indian monks, Vajrabodhi and his disciple Amoghavajra, who went to China in A.D. 719. The latter translated a number of Mantrayānic texts and won the favours of the ruling power. There were earlier translations made by Śrīmitra of Kucha (A.D. 307-12) of *Mahāmāyūrī Vidyārājñī* and *Mahābhiṣeka-dhāraṇī*, but their teachings were confined to a select few. It was in the eighth century that Subhākarasiṁha (A.D. 637-735), who was formerly a king of Orissa, Vajrabodhi (A.D. 720), and Amoghavajra (A.D. 705-74) developed and popularized the Mantrayāna school in China. This school subscribed to the philosophical principles of Yogācāra Vijñānavāda, but prescribed a new process for realization of the Truth. The process consisted mainly of meditations with artificial aids, such as *mudrās* (finger poses), *maṇḍalas* (diagrams), *āsanas* (sitting postures), and intonation of *mantras* (magical spells). This school encouraged worship of images of divine *bodhisattvas* and regarded Mahāvairocana as the supreme Buddha. The cult of worship of divine beings popularized the sect in China and Japan.

Chu-she: The Abhidharma texts of this realistic school of thought, particularly the *Abhidharmakośa* of Vasubandhu, contained such minute

[62] Published by the University of Hawaii, Honolulu, 1947, p. 83.

and logical analyses of mental and material factors of the phenomenal world that these were utilized fully by the writers and commentators of Yogācāra texts. Vasubandhu happened to be at first a realist (Sarvāstivādin) and later became an exponent of Vijñānavāda. Paramārtha and Hiuen-Tsang, as also his disciple Kuei-chi, studied and translated both the realistic and idealistic works of Vasubandhu, and it is their translations of the *Abhidharmakośa* that laid the foundation in China of the Chu-she sect, which was further enriched by the works of a few distinguished disciples of Hiuen-Tsang. Long ago there was an Abhidharma school in China called Pi-tan. It was replaced by the Chu-she sect. According to this sect, elements (*dharmas*), both mental and material, are changing every moment (*anitya, kṣaṇika*), though their pastness, presentness, and futurity exist at all times. These elements are, however, without any permanent substance (*anātman*). The changes, according to some thinkers, happen in characteristics (*lakṣaṇas*), and according to others, in effectiveness (*kāritra*). Hence the realism of this sect had nothing to do with the materialistic schools of thought.

IV. JAPAN

Japan received Buddhism from China through Korea in A.D. 552 along with the Buddhist texts, including those held in high esteem by the principal sects of China. Of these texts, mention may be made of the *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka, Sukhāvatī-vyūha, Prajñāpāramitā, Suvarṇaprabhāsa,* and *Abhidharmakośa*. The sectarian development of Japan followed that of China on account of the close cultural and religious contact between the two countries. Excepting the Nichiren sect and a few sub-sects, all the Japanese sects were more or less the same as the Chinese. Therefore a brief reference only will be made to them. It was from A.D. 710, during the reign of Empress Gemmyo (Nara period), that the sects began to appear in Japan.

HOSSO, KUSHA, KEGON, AND RISSHU

Hosso: The earliest and the most influential sect was Hosso, corresponding to Chinese Fa-hsiang (= Dharmalakṣaṇa or Vijñānavāda). It was introduced into Japan by Gyogi Bosatsu (A.D. 670-749), who was very friendly with Emperor Shomu.

Kusha: The Kusha (= Kośa) school was first brought from China in A.D. 658 by Chitsu and Chitatsu, but it did not make much progress at that time. A century later, this school was revived by Gembo, who studied the treatises of this school in China and was ultimately given official recognition as an appendage to the Hosso sect.

Kegon: This sect corresponds to the Chinese Hua-yen (= Avataṁsaka) school, and was introduced into Japan in A.D. 736 by Dosen, a Chinese priest, who was accompanied by the monks Bodhisena of South India and Fo-tieh of Kamboja. It was propagated by Roben (A.D. 689-773), a counsellor of Emperor Shomu.

Risshu or Ritsu: This sect is the same as the Chinese Lü (= Vinaya), which laid stress on disciplinary rules and regulations. It got recognition in Japan at the time of Emperor Shomu, but it did not prosper well. It was, however, revived later in the twelfth century. The Buddhist priests of the Nara period enjoyed royal favours and acquired both wealth and power.

TENDAI AND SHINGON

The second stage of sectarian development took place during the Heian or Fujiwara period (eighth to twelfth century), when Kyoto was the capital of Japan. Two very important and influential sects, viz. Tendai and Shingon, appeared in this period.

Tendai: It corresponds to Chinese T'ien-t'ai (=Saddharma-puṇḍarīka). It was introduced into Japan in A.D. 807 by Saicho, who adopted the Chinese doctrines but added to them the observance of the disciplinary rules embodied in the Chinese Vinaya called *Bommo Kyo* (*Brahmajāla-Sūtra*) in place of the Hīnayānic Vinaya texts.

Shingon: This sect is identical with the Chinese Chen-yen (=Mantrayāna). It was first introduced into Japan at an early date as a religion of magic and incantations. It, however, did not find favour with the people until Kobo Daishi brought out its philosophical importance by explaining its fundamental principle, viz. that the universe was not different from *buddha*-nature or *dharmakāya*. It conceived of Vairocana Buddha as identical with *dharmakāya*.

The Tendai and Shingon sects were friendly to each other and maintained their popularity for three centuries from A.D. 800 to 1100. In these two sects, there were a number of recluses, who lived in mountains and practised austerities and also visited the holy sites of the Shintos. They brought about a friendly relation between the Buddhists and the Shintoists.

YŪZŪ NEMBUTSU, JODO, AND NICHIREN

Yūzū Nembutsu: The Fujiwara period came to an end in the middle of the twelfth century when the Shoguns came into prominence and the capital was shifted to Kamakura. The teachings of the Tendai and Singon sects were appreciated by the educated but not by the commoners, who sought a devotional religion. In course of time, it came to be

believed that invocation of Buddha Amida (=Amitābha) was all that was necessary to purify oneself of all sins and to attain rebirth in the paradise of Amitābha. Ryonin, a priest of the Tendai sect, claimed that he had visualized Amida and learnt from him that the repetition of 'Nembutsu' (= *Nemu Amida Butsu,* i.e. *Namo Amita Buddhāya*) could assure one rebirth in Sukhāvatī. In A.D. 1124 he founded the Yūzū Nembutsu sect.

Jodo: It is similar to the Chinese sect Ching-tu (=Sukhāvatī or Pure Happy Land). It was founded in A.D. 1175 by Honen (A.D. 1133-212), who instructed its followers to repeat 'Nembutsu' as many times as possible and to observe the monastic rules and formalities. 'Nembutsu' was repeated by Honen and other teachers 60,000 times daily.

Honen had six prominent disciples, of whom Shokobo, Zennobo, and Shinran introduced three sub-sects, viz. Chinzei, Jodo Seizan, and Jodo Shinshu. Of these, Jodo and its sub-sect Jodo Shinshu commanded the largest number of followers.

Nichiren: Perhaps as a reaction to the extreme devotion inculcated by the Jodo sects appeared the school of Nichiren, who was born in a fisherman's family in A.D. 1222. He was enraged at the disrespect shown to the image of Śākya Buddha, when it was being replaced by that of Buddha Amitābha. He was ordained at the age of fifteen in the Jodo sect, but on studying the different texts, he preferred the *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka*, particularly its twelfth and thirteenth chapters, 'Utsāha-parivarta' and 'Sukhavihāra-parivarta'. He replaced the *mantra* 'Nembutsu' by '*Nemu Myoho Renge Kyo*' (Homage to the Saddharma-puṇḍarīka). He denounced bitterly the teachings of other sects. On account of the assimilation of his religion with national life, his sect caught the imagination of the people and became very popular.

THE ZEN AND ITS SUB-SECTS

The Zen is the same as the Chinese Ch'an (=Dhyāna) sect of Bodhidharma. The introduction of this sect into Japan was first attempted in A.D. 851-58 by a Chinese priest called Giku. It was Eisai (A.D. 1141-215) who revived this sect and popularized it in Japan. He went to China to study the T'ien-t'ai doctrines, but he found there at that time that Ch'an was more popular than T'ien-t'ai. He preferred the Ch'an (Zen) teachings, which, he said, would ensure the prosperity of his countrymen. He received royal favours and propagated the Zen doctrines in the name of a sub-sect called Rin-zai (=Chinese Lin-chi). A sub-sect, called Soto or Sodo (=Chinese Ts'ao-t'ung), was started by his disciple Dogen (A.D. 1200-53). Long after this, in A.D. 1654, another sub-sect, called Obaku, was formed by Ingen.

The fundamental teaching of the Zen sect was contemplation to realize the true nature of the individual and the universe. Contemplation produced mental balance, which the fencers in Japan needed very much in fencing. In course of time, the contemplative aspect of the Zen doctrines was transformed into a military creed and strengthened the minds of soldiers. The Zen sect laid stress on the strict observance of disciplinary rules. Its teachings penetrated into every aspect of Japanese national life, be it poetry or drama, painting or architecture, industrial or social life.

V. TIBET

It may be said that Buddhism was regularly introduced into Tibet in the seventh century, through the efforts of its talented ruler Sroṅ-btsan-sgam-po, though Tibetans must have come into contact with Buddhism earlier, surrounded as they were by Buddhist countries. The prevailing primitive religion of Tibet before the introduction of Buddhism, known as Bon (Phön), was permeated with sorcery, devil-dances, animal and human sacrifice, and animistic beliefs. Therefore the efforts of Śāntarakṣita, who was invited by the Tibetan ruler Khri-sroṅ-lde-btsan (A.D. 755-97) to preach Buddhism in Tibet, to establish the doctrines of 'Ten Virtues' (*pāramitās*) and the 'Chain of Causal Phenomena' (*pratītya-samutpāda*) failed, as the Tibetans could not rise to these heights all at once. However, Padmasambhava, a kinsman of Śāntarakṣita, succeeded in establishing the Vajrayāna form of Buddhism, which could find place to many of the old practices in a modified form. Gradually, over the centuries, the pure Mahāyāna doctrines also were introduced into the land, and new sects came into existence trying to reform the older ones, either trying to synthesize with the old practices and beliefs, or attempting to do away with them altogether. Large number of Buddhist Sanskrit texts—canonical as well as other philosophical and Tāntric texts—were translated into Tibetan. While many of the original Sanskrit works are lost in India itself, these translations, very meticulously done, are still available to us. The principal Bhuddhist sects in Tibet are the following:

Rñiṅ-ma-pa: The Tāntric sect established by Padmasambhava in the eighth century came to be known by this name. The followers of this sect consider Padmasambhava as their *guru*. They combine many of the old practices of the Bon religion with Vajrayāna practices, and worship both fierce demoniacal and benign divine deities. They wear red caps or hats to distinguish themselves from the followers of the earlier Bon sect, who used black caps. In course of time, many corrupt practices and loose morals entered among the followers of this sect. This gave rise to several reform sects.

Bkaḥ-gdams-pa: To fight the corruption that had crept into the life of the people, the Tibetan king, well known as Jñānaprabha, induced with much effort the great Dīpaṅkara Śrījñāna or Atiśa (eleventh century) of the Vikramaśilā monastery to go to Tibet to preach pure and higher form of Buddhism. Dīpaṅkara taught doctrines based on Yogācāra traditions and preached against magical practices and insisted on a strict life of celibacy. His disciple Ḥbrom-ston established this sect on the basis of these teachings. The followers of this sect also wear red caps.

Two more sects, Bkaḥ-rgyud-pa and Sa-skya-pa, allied to Bkaḥ-gdams-pa, with lesser reformative zeal but trying to synthesize the old and the new, also arose at this time, and later often relapsed into demonolatry and sorcery.

Bkaḥ-rgyud-pa: This sect was founded in the eleventh century by Lama Mar-pa. It was to some extent influenced by the Zen school of China. It later formed into several sub-sects of which Ḥbrug-pa and Karma-pa are important as the former spread into Bhutan and the latter into Sikkim and Nepal.

Sa-skya-pa: It derives its name from the grey soil (*sa-skya*) of the place (the present Sa-skya) in which its first monastery was built in *c.* A.D. 1071. This sect emphasized learning and produced several great scholars of whom the historian and author Bu-ston (A.D. 1290-364), who collected and arranged all the available Tibetan translations of the Buddhist texts into two groups —Bkaḥ-ḥgyur and Bstan-ḥgyur,[63] and Tāranātha, who belonged to its Jonang sub-sect and wrote a history of Buddhism in Tibetan, are justly famous.

Dge-lugs-pa: This sect, founded in the fourteenth century, is the latest and most important of all the sects in Tibet from the points of view of doctrine, number of followers, and the influence it commands. It is the dominant sect in Tibet at present, and its religious head, the Dalai Lama, is also the spiritual and temporal head of Tibet. This sect is based on the same doctrines as the Bkaḥ-gdams-pa, but lays great stress on learning, moral purity, and discipline. It has therefore come to be known as 'Dge-lugs-pa', which means the 'School of the Virtuous'. The followers of this sect wear yellow caps.

[63] These two groups are popularly known as Kanjur and Tanjur. The former means 'Word of the Master' and contains more than 100 volumes of canonical literature, consisting of about 1,108 distinct books, and the latter means 'the commentaries' and contains about 225 volumes, consisting of 3,458 works on Buddhist philosophy, Tantra, and other non-canonical literature.

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EMERGENCE OF MAHĀYĀNA BUDDHISM

THE TERMS 'HĪNAYĀNA' AND 'MAHĀYĀNA'

TO the early Buddhists the term 'Hīnayāna' was unknown. It is not to be found in the Pali Piṭakas. It came into use in the early Buddhist Sanskrit works, but not by way of disparagement as we notice in the later Mahāyāna works. The original and more common terms used for the two branches of Buddhism were (i) Buddhayāna or Tathāgatayāna or Mahāyāna or sometimes Bodhisattvayāna,[1] and (ii) Śrāvakayāna, as also Pratyeka-buddhayāna[2] or Hīnayāna. The simple reason adduced for prefixing *mahā* (superior) to *yāna* (vehicle) is that it carries an adept to the highest goal, the Buddhahood or Tathāgatahood, as was attained by Siddhārtha Gautama, while the other *yāna*, with the prefix *hīna* (inferior), carried the adept only to the stage of an *arhat*, a state lower in many respects to that of the Buddha.

Hīnayāna is meant for the *śrāvakas* only, i.e. persons of average intellect who are capable of attaining perfection only by listening to, and practising, the *dharma* (religion) that has once been promulgated by beings of extraordinary intellect like a Buddha. Mahāyāna is meant for those superior beings who achieve their own salvation without anybody's help and who help others to attain it by giving them the necessary aid and guidance. In short, Mahāyāna can make a *buddha*, while Hīnayāna can make a perfect *śrāvaka*, only an *arhat*.

Another explanation has been offered by Asaṅga in his *Sūtrālaṅkāra* in support of the use of the prefixes *mahā* and *hīna*. He says that the followers of Mahāyāna never seek their own salvation before others have attained it. They have to take the vow that they will attain *bodhi* only after they have done all that is necessary, even by sacrificing their own lives, for making all other beings attain the goal. It is after such dedication that they succeed in reaching the goal. It is for such self-sacrifice that they are distinguished as Mahāyānists. The Śrāvakayānists or Pratyeka-buddhayānists, Asaṅga says, seek their own salvation first. They start practising the Buddhist code of physical and mental discipline from the day of their initiation, and it is only after they have attained the state of sanctity of an *arhat* that they come

[1] '*Tathāgata*' may be taken as a synonym for '*buddha*'. The term '*bodhisattva*' is applicable only to those who are on the way to Buddhahood and have not yet attained it; Bodhisattvayāna is not identical with Buddhayāna.

[2] *Pratyeka-buddhas* are those Buddhist ascetics who live a solitary life and attain the knowledge possessed by a *buddha*, but never care to preach it to help other beings.

out to the world to explain the teachings which had benefited them. Asaṅga considers such a course as selfish and justifies thereby the use of the prefix *hīna* for the Śrāvakayānists.

The philosophical explanation of the two *yānas* as offered by the Mahāyāna works is as follows: There are two *āvaraṇas* (covers) to the realization of the Truth: one is the cover of impurities (*kleśāvaraṇa*) and the other is the cover of ignorance that shields away the Truth (*jñeyāvaraṇa*). The *kleśāvaraṇa* is removable by the observance of the ethical laws and the practice of the various forms of meditation. The Hīnayānists, according to the Mahāyāna works, are taught only the means of the removal of *kleśāvaraṇa*, and, as such, they get free from impurities (*kleśas*) and become *arhats*. But they are not taught the Truth, the exposition of which is given only in the Mahāyāna works, into which their intellect is unable to penetrate, and, as such, they are incapable of acquiring the highest knowledge for removing the *jñeyāvaraṇa*. By the removal of *kleśāvaraṇa* one can realize merely *pudgala-śūnyatā* (absence of individuality), while by removing *jñeyāvaraṇa* one realizes both *pudgala-śūnyatā* and *dharma-śūnyatā* (non-existence of all worldly objects). The Mahāyānists remove both *kleśāvaraṇa* and *jñeyāvaraṇa*, visualize the Truth, and become *buddhas*. It is for this superior attainment that they deserve the distinctive appellation as 'Mahāyānists'.

MAHAYANA AND HINAYANA NOT ANTAGONISTIC

It should be observed that Mahāyānism is not antagonistic to Hīnayānism; on the contrary, it accepts the teachings of Hīnayāna *in toto* and adds to them its new ideas and principles. Mahāyāna is also derived from the same sources as those of Hīnayāna. It is well known that about a century after the Buddha's death, several sects appeared, and each sect cited as its authority words and passages occurring in the same Tripiṭaka. The differences of views rested mainly on the emphasis laid on, and interpretation given to, certain sayings of the Buddha. The views ranged from the theory of *trikāla-sat* (existence of past and future in the present) to *śūnyatā* (absence of any mental or material elements), from the non-existence of soul to the existence of a temporary self (*pudgala*) until the attainment of *nirvāṇa*; and from the human to the most divine and ultimately to the cosmic conception of the Buddha. It is therefore nothing unusual that the views expressed by later sects, the Mahāyānists, should be more advanced, and based on the Buddha's sayings. The gradual evolution of Mahāyāna doctrines is distinctly traceable in the various sectarian views, and it will be shown how the Mahāyānists utilized the sayings of the Buddha for establishing their points of view, and how their doctrines gradually emerged out

of these sayings. In many respects they excelled the early orthodox sects, particularly in their extreme altruism, in their broader outlook, and, above all, in their inclusion of the laity in the scheme of salvation.

The Mahāyānists with all their emphasis on *dharma-śūnyatā* have not denied the value of the ethical teachings of the Buddha, nor of the minute analysis of mind and other constituents of a being, nor even of the cosmological speculations. On the contrary, they followed even more strictly the *vinaya* (disciplinary) code of the Hīnayānists, and practised the meditational exercises prescribed in the Hīnayāna texts. They, of course, contended that all these teachings were mere expedients (*upāya-kauśalya*) taken resort to by the Teacher in order to attract the uninitiated into his ways of thinking. When these teachings had served their purpose of elevating spiritually the mind of the uninitiated, their utility was exhausted, and the initiated were then told that what they had so long studied, observed, and practised were unreal, and they should regard them as non-existent (*śūnya*), as mirage, dream, and so forth. In the Pali texts, the disciples are also taught that the practices prescribed by the Teacher for the purpose of spiritual training should be eschewed like a raft after crossing the stream, for even the least clinging to the spiritual practices would be a hindrance to the attainment of *nirvāṇa,* or complete freedom of mind (*cetaso vimokkha*). Hence it is apparent that Mahāyānism is not altogether a deviation from the original teachings, and that Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna doctrines were not directly opposed to each other. It is only with the development of new ideas that fresh interpretations were being given by the disciples on the original sayings of the Buddha, most of which appeared in the Pali Piṭaka, and, in course of time, the Mahāyānic teaching of *dharma-śūnyatā* became more appealing to the intelligentzia and put into shade the Hīnayāna teachings in some parts of India and Asia.

DHARMA-ŚŪNYATĀ

The most fundamental doctrine of the Mahāyānists was *dharma-śūnyatā,* the non-existence of the phenomenal world in reality, and they claim that it was derived from the different utterances of the Buddha. They contend that the higher and deeper teaching was imparted by the Teacher secretly to a select few, who were highly advanced in spiritual culture, and the lower and simpler teaching to the people at large among whom arose the *śrāvakas.* They base their contention on the unwillingness[a] at first shown by the Buddha, after the attainment of *bodhi,* to preach the Truth realized by him. He said that the doctrine was very deep, difficult

[a] *Dīgha,* II. p. 36 ; *Majjhima,* I. p. 160 ; *Mahāvastu,* III. p. 314 ; *Divyāvadāna,* p. 492 ; *Lalitavistara,* pp. 395-96.

to visualize and comprehend, quiet, excellent, beyond disputation, subtle, and realizable only by the wise.[4] They argue that at Brahmā's request what the Buddha preached was a popular form of his profound teachings, while he communicated his deeper teachings to a select few who were advanced *bodhisattvas*. In the *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka*, the words of the Buddha have been slightly modified thus: The Buddha-knowledge is too deep and difficult to be realized and comprehended by the *śrāvakas* and *pratyeka-buddhas*.[5]

The inference drawn by the Mahāyānists from these words may be far-fetched, but it must be admitted that the exposition given of the fundamental teaching of the Buddha, namely, the *pratītya-samutpāda* formula, in the Pali texts, in the form of twelve links, is not very philosophical and that the correct and deeper meaning of the formula seems to be the one given by Nāgārjuna and other Mahāyāna writers that it established the relative existence of the phenomenal world, i.e. *saṁsāra* is the manifold and variegated appearance of the unity, *nirvāṇa* or *śūnyatā*. There is much reasoning in the Mahāyānic interpretation of the formula, and this is also admitted in many passages of the Pali Nikāyas, e.g. 'One who realizes the theory of causation visualizes the Truth. One who visualizes the Truth realizes the theory of causation.'[6]

In the *Saddhamma-saṅgaha* appears the following statement: 'One who realizes my excellent *dhamma* (teaching) sees me, and one who does not realize my excellent *dhamma*, he, in spite of seeing me, does not see me.'[7] Buddhaghoṣa also admits indirectly that the formula excluded the two extreme views, viz. eternalism (Śāśvatavāda) and annihilationism (Ucchedavāda) and established that the truth was something midway between, or beyond these, two assertions.

Apart from this formula of the chain of causation, there are in the Pali Nikāyas a few passages which may well be interpreted in the Mahāyānic sense of *dharma-śūnyatā* (non-existence of objects) or *tathatā* (sameness or thatness of worldly objects). One of such oft-quoted passages is as follows:

[4] *Ayaṁ dhammo gambhīro duddaso duranubodho santo paṇīto atakkāvacaro nipuṇo paṇḍitavedanīyo*. In some places the last word '*paṇḍitavedanīya*' is replaced by '*paccattaṁ veditabbo viññūhi*' or '*pratyātmavedyo vijñebhiḥ*' (realizable by the wise within one's own self). The word '*santo*' (*śānta*, i.e. quiet) is explained elsewhere as 'undisturbed by origin and decay'.

[5] *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka* (Asiatic Society, Calcutta), pp. 23, 27.

[6] *Yo paṭiccasamuppādaṁ passati so dhammaṁ passati,*
Yo dhammaṁ passati so paṭiccasamuppādaṁ passati.
—*Majjhima*, I. p. 191; *Saṁyutta*, III. p. 120.

[7] *Yo me passati saddhammaṁ so maṁ passati Vakkali,*
Apassamāno saddhammaṁ maṁ passe pi na passati.
—*Saddhamma-saṅgaha* (*J.P.T.S.*, 1890), p. 61.

The Truth is beyond the fourfold proposition, viz.—

(1) *Hoti tathāgato*[8] *paraṁ maraṇā* (The *tathāgata* exists after death).

(2) *Na hoti tathāgato paraṁ maraṇā* (he does not exist after death).

(3) *Hoti ca na hoti tathāgato paraṁ maraṇā* (he both exists and does not exist after death).

(4) *Na hoti ca na na hoti tathāgato paraṁ maraṇā* (he neither exists nor does not exist after death).

The only conceivable truth beyond this fourfold proposition, according to the Mahāyānists, is the inconceivable, inexpressible unity relating to which none of the four affirmations and negations is applicable.

There are also positive assertions about the Truth in the Pali texts, e.g. 'There is the unborn, unoriginating, uncreated, and unconstituted.'[9] This positive conception is further developed in the Nikāyas thus: 'It is consciousness (*viññāṇa*) which is signless and infinite, radiant on all sides, in which (all the distinctions like) water, earth, fire, and air have no footing, in which long and short, subtle and gross, good and bad, or name and form cease, and in which disappears the (constituted) *viññāṇa* after cessation.'[10]

In more than one passage, it has been stated that the consciousness (*viññāṇa*) of an *arhat* after death is locationless or supportless.[11]

One of the expressions of grief at the Buddha's demise, as uttered by Anuruddha, that 'His mind became free like the extinction of a lamp',[12] caused a good deal of speculation among the present-day scholars. To some it conveyed the sense of *nibbāna* as 'extinction', i.e. nihilism, while to others as the 'indeterminate state' in which the flame is supposed to remain after extinction. It is really very difficult to come to any conclusion from such enigmatic sayings. The Mahāyānists, however, are emphatic in their assertion that such passages support their interpretation that the Truth or Reality or *nirvāṇa* is the indeterminable, unique, non-dual totality or substratum of objective existences. It is perfectly calm, undisturbed by origination or destruction (*anutpattika-dharma*).

From the above-mentioned passages occurring in the Pali texts, the Mahāyānists may contend that their philosophy is based on the actual utterances of the Buddha. It should, however, be remembered that the criticisms

[8] '*Tathāgata*' means one who has realized the *tathātva* or *tathatā* (sameness of worldly objects).

[9] *Atthi bhikkhave ajātam abhūtam asaṅkhataṁ* (*Itivuttaka*, p. 37; *Udāna*, p. 80).

[10] *Viññāṇam anidassanam anantaṁ sabbato pabhaṁ,*
Ettha āpo ca paṭhavī tejo vāyo na gādhati,
Ettha dīghañ ca rassañ ca anuṁ thulaṁ subhāsubhaṁ,
Ettha nāmañ ca rūpañ ca asesam uparujjhati,
Viññāṇassa nirodhena etthetam uparujjhatīti.
—*Dīgha*, I. p. 223; *Majjhima*, I. p. 329.

[11] *Appatiṭṭhitena ca viññāṇena Godhiko kulaputto parinibbuto* (*Saṁyutta*, III. p. 124).

[12] *Pajjotass' eva nibbānaṁ vimokho cetaso ahūti* (*Dīgha*, II. p. 157).

of the Mahāyāna writers were directed particularly against the Sarvāstivāda (=Vaibhāṣika) school of thought, which upheld the presence of seventy-five elements in past, present, and future, and not so much against the Theravādins (=Sthaviravādins), the oldest school of thought, from which sprang up gradually the Sautrāntikas and the Sautrāntika-Yogācāras. The Theravādins have not expressly admitted the *dharma-śūnyatā*, but they repeatedly assert the *anityatā* (impermanence), *kṣaṇikatā* (momentariness), and *anātmatā* (substancelessness) of the worldly *dharmas*, which are constituted and include the five *skandhas* (mass of elements) forming a being. Hence the Mahāyānists could claim that their doctrines were based on the original sayings of the Buddha and that the interpretation given by them was being handed down by a section of the Buddha's direct disciples. This, of course, will not bear criticism from the historical standpoint, and one must admit that in the evolution of Buddhist thought, the new interpretation was given by later writers and thinkers, who, for authenticating their views or interpretations, claimed that these had been derived from the founder's original sayings.

DEIFICATION OF THE BUDDHA

The Mahāyānists, after establishing their *dharma-śūnyatā* or *tathatā*, made speculations regarding the body of the Buddha on the same lines. They contended that as there was no distinction between the knower and the known, the Buddha was identical with *dharma-śūnyatā* or *tathatā*; he was a *tathāgata*, whose body could only be *dharmakāya*, the cosmic body or the body composed of all *dharmas* of the universe. In the early Pali texts, there are a few passages in which the Buddha has been described as the embodiment of all *kuśala-dharmas* or of all the teachings imparted by him. These bear no metaphysical sense, though a few scholars have referred to these passages as points of contact between Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna.

Along with the metaphysical conceptions of the Buddha's body, the Mahāyānists gave currency to the belief that the *buddhas* appearing in the mortal worlds were mere phantoms (*nirmāṇakāya*) created by the real Tathāgata for educating the beings of the world in spiritual matters. This conception about the Buddha's body was derived by the Mahāyānists primarily from the Hīnayāna sects, the Mahāsaṅghikas and their offshoots, and secondarily from the few passages found in Pali and other Hīnayāna texts, in which the Buddha is described as a superman, a supergod, and even the highest conceivable god surpassing the Mahābrahmā.

When a century had elapsed after the Buddha's death, it was not unusual that his devotees should deify him and look upon him more as a god than as a human being. This deification was first done by the Vaiśālians,

both monks and lay-devotees, for which they earned the appellation of Mahāsaṅghikas in contrast to the orthodox school, which was confined to a limited number of elders (*theras*). As early as the fourth century B.C., the Mahāsaṅghikas raised the question whether the attainments of Gautama Buddha were the same as those of his disciples who had become *arhats*, like Śāriputra, Maudgalyāyana, and Mahākāśyapa. The orthodox sect, the Theravādins, admitted that the Buddha's attainments were much higher than those of the *arhats*, but as far as emancipation from worldly bondage was concerned, there was no difference between a *buddha* and an *arhat*. The special powers attributed to the Buddha in Hīnayāna texts, and unattainable by the *arhats*, are the ten extraordinary attainments (*daśabala*), four kinds of self-confidence (*vaiśāradyas*), four ways of attaining popularity (*saṅgrahavastus*), and eighteen special attributes (*āveṇika-dharmas*).[13]

Thus the superiority of *buddhas* to *arhats* is unquestioned in Pali texts, and it has been freely admitted by the Hīnayānists that the Buddha's appearance in this world is extremely rare and his powers and knowledge are incomparable to those of any god or saint, however noble and perfect. Then, in the last discourse of the Buddha, the *Mahāparinibbāna-Sutta*, the devotees are directed to visit the four places sanctified by the Buddha's birth, attainment of *bodhi*, first preaching of the Dharma, and demise. Evidently such directions were later interpolations, but, in any case, earlier than the time of emergence of Mahāyānism. Hence, it is apparent that the Hīnayānists were gradually deifying the Buddha, and within a century after the Buddha's death the Vaiśālians preached that Gautama Buddha was not actually born in this world, but that he made only a show of existence for following the ways of the world (*lokānuvartana*).

In the *Mahāvastu*,[14] an old text of the Mahāsaṅghika-Lokottaravādins, appears the following account:

> Supra-mundane are the practices of the Exalted. The saint's walking, standing, sitting, and lying are also supra-mundane.
>
> There should not be any doubt that the body of the Sugata, which obtains the end of the bondage of existences, is also supra-mundane.
>
> For following the ways of the world, *buddhas* take resort to both mundane and supra-mundane concepts.
>
> For following the ways of the world, they wash their feet, though no dirt clings to them, their feet being fresh like the lotus leaves.
>
> For following the ways of the world, they take medicines, though there is no disease. The fruits of actions of the leaders are immense.

[13] See *Mahāvyutpatti* for details, s.v.
[14] I. pp. 167-70.

For following the ways of the world, they speak of oldness, though for victors endowed with all the qualities of a victor no oldness exists.

For following the ways of the world, they speak of their exertions, though they acquired perfections in meritorious deeds through innumerable aeons.

For following the ways of the world, they make a show of ignorance (*bālabhāva*), though they acquired perfection in knowledge through endless aeons.

From the above extracts, it is evident that the Mahāsaṅghika-Lokottaravādins, who belonged to the Hīnayāna group of sects, had already deified the Teacher. The growth of this sect may be assigned to the pre-Aśokan period. This docetic view of the Lokottaravādins was shared by the Vetulyakas (Pali: Vetullavādins) whose doctrines have been noticed in the *Kathāvatthu*, which text, according to the Ceylonese tradition, was composed in Aśoka's Council. It is not improbable that the present text of the *Kathāvatthu* has grown by accretions, and the discussion relating to the Vetulyakas may be one of such late accretions. In the *Kathāvatthu*-commentary, they are described as Mahāśūnyatāvādins, which is the common appellation of the Mahāyānists. In the post-Christian era, they made the Abhayagiri monastery one of their favourite resorts, and it is well known that the inmates of this monastery upheld the Mahāyānic views and became for some time a strong rival of the Mahāvihāravāsins, the stronghold of the Theravādins. It is therefore clear that out of the Mahāsaṅghikas branched out the Śaila sects and the Vetulyakas, who paved the way for the advent of Mahāyāna conception of the three kinds of bodies (*trikāya*) of the Buddha.

BODHISATTVA CONCEPTION

The metaphysical conception of the Buddha's body as *dharmakāya* is undoubtedly a further development of the docetic views of the Mahāsaṅghika group of sects. The conception of *bodhisattva* and the growth of the Bodhisattva cult among the Mahāyānists followed as a corollary to the Buddhological speculations.

By *bodhisattva*, the Hīnayānists meant all the previous existences of Gautama Buddha since his meeting with Dīpaṅkara Buddha, who foretold him, when he was born as Sumedha Brāhmaṇa, that he would ultimately attain *bodhi* and become a *buddha*. During these several existences, he is believed to have attained perfection in the six (according to the Sanskrit, including Mahāyānic, tradition), or ten (according to the Pali tradition),

virtues known as *pāramis* or *pāramitās* (highest excellences), which are as follows: (1) *dāna* (gift), (2) *śīla* (moral or religious observances), (3) *kṣānti* (forbearance), (4) *vīrya* (energy or exertion), (5) *dhyāna* (meditation), and (6) *prajñā* (knowledge), the additional four according to the Pali tradition being, (7) *praṇidhāna* (aspiration or resolution), (8) *upāya-kauśalya* (skilfulness in expedients for doing good to others), (9) *bala* (strength or power), and (10) *jñāna* (knowledge).

According to the Hīnayānists, Gautama Buddha alone in all his previous existences, commencing from his birth as Sumedha Brāhmaṇa up to his last existence in the Tuṣita heaven, just before his descent to the mortal world, was a *bodhisattva*. As a *bodhisattva*, he lived the life of an average being acquiring merits and avoiding demerits as far as possible, and in certain existences he did not hesitate to give up everything, including his body, in order to acquire the six supreme virtues (*pāramitās*) of making gifts, observing *śīlas*, etc. According to the Mahāsaṅghika-Lokottaravādins, the Bodhisattva in his last existence as Siddhārtha Gautama was not conceived in the womb, nor was he actually born like an ordinary human being. As he was more than a god, he merely made a show of existence as a mortal being, and similarly made a show of ignorance, family life, struggle for emancipation, and so forth.

The Mahāyānists took their stand on the above-mentioned conception of the Hīnayānists and upheld the view that if it was possible for an average being to become ultimately a Gautama Buddha, why should not at least some of the beings of this world aspire to live the life of a *bodhisattva* in order to be a *buddha* in the long run?

They contended that there were among the worldly beings such individuals who cherished the intention of becoming great like a *buddha*. These beings are in a position to develop *bodhicitta*, i.e. a firm resolution to attain *bodhi*, and to fulfil the *pāramitās* and become a *buddha*. The Mahāyānists added that the development of *bodhicitta* should include the condition that the adept must dedicate his life in his several existences to the service of others, and should not care to attain his own salvation unless and until all others have attained it, because seeking one's own salvation before others smacks of selfishness and does not prove his self-sacrifice to the fullest extent. There are therefore, according to the Mahāyānists, still many *bodhisattvas* who have decided to continue to remain as such and not become a *buddha*, as in that case they would attain the metaphysical state which is beyond good or evil, merit or demerit, and would not be in a position to render service to the suffering beings of the world.

With this conception of *bodhisattva*, the Mahāyāna writers have chalked

out in detail the career of a *bodhisattva* in which they have laid stress not only on the fulfilment of *pāramitās*, but also on several forms of meditation with a view to training the mind for the realization of *dharma-śūnyatā* or *tathatā*. Thus, it is apparent how the Mahāyānists magnified the Hīnayānic conception of *bodhisattva*.

In order to ascertain the time when the *bodhisattva* conception originated, we have to find out the time of composition of the Jātakas and Avadānas, which contain all the accounts of the various existences of the *bodhisattvas* as conceived by the Hīnayānists. It should be observed that in the early Pali texts appear neither the conception of *bodhisattva* nor the fulfilment of *pāramitās*. There is no mention of six or ten *pāramitās* in the list of *dhammas* found in the *Mahāparinibbāna* and other Suttas, and not even in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*. It seems that only in the post-Aśokan days, the *bodhisattva* conception was engrafted on the original teachings of the Buddha, and this led to the composition of the Jātakas and Avadānas. The Jātaka stories were included in the *Vinaya Piṭaka* of some of the sects other than Theravāda, and appeared intermixed with the life of Gautama Buddha, before as well as after his attainment of *bodhi*. In the Pali Piṭaka, these have been collected to form an independent text while the Sanskritists, i.e. the Sarvāstivādins, compiled the Avadānas, which contained the accounts of the previous lives not only of Gautama Buddha, but also of his noted disciples and devotees. The Jātakas and Avadānas furnished the motifs to the sculptors of the Bharhut and Sanchi railings, which are dated about the second or first century B.C. So the origin of the *bodhisattva* conception, along with the composition of the Jātakas and Avadānas, may be placed between the third and second century B.C. It must be some time after this date that the Mahāyānists developed their conception of *bodhisattva* and converted it into a creed known as Bodhisattvayāna.

In consequence of their new conception of *buddhas* and *bodhisattvas*, the Mahāyāna writers spoke of their number in millions and millions, incalculable as the sands of the Gaṅgā. From among these countless *bodhisattvas* some have been given concrete forms and qualities. In the earlier Mahāyāna texts, emphasis has been laid more on qualities than on forms, while the emphasis was reversed in the later texts. In the *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka*, *Kāraṇḍa-vyūha*, and other texts are described the powers and virtues of several *bodhisattvas*, some of whom are Avalokiteśvara, Vajrapāṇi, Bhaiṣajyarāja, Samantabhadra, and Mahāsthāmaprāpta. These *bodhisattvas* were looked upon by the Mahāyānists as benign gods to be adored and worshipped, and in course of time, they were deified and given definite forms and insignia for the purpose of worship with elaborate rituals.

STAGES OF SPIRITUAL PROGRESS

The Mahāyānists, in spite of their new ideals imbued with extreme altruism, did not discard the scheme of *sādhanā* prescribed by the Hīnayānists for the progressive spiritual acquisitions and advancement. According to the Hīnayānists, the spiritual career of a person commences with his first initiation (*pravrajyā*), when he becomes a *śramaṇa* (a recluse, a novice). He resides in a monastery and takes the preliminary moral training, and is then given the higher ordination (*upasampadā*), when he becomes a *bhikṣu*, a regular member of the Saṅgha. He is then required to go through the eightfold path, which, in short, constitutes the threefold practices: *śīla* (observance of ethical laws), *citta* or *samādhi* (various meditational practices), and *prajñā* (knowledge of the four truths, the causal law, the *skandhas, dhātus, āyatanas,* etc.). A monk gradually perfects himself in these threefold practices and rises from one spiritual stage to another.

He remains an average person (*pṛthagjana*) until he gets rid of the belief in the existence of self, in the efficacy of rites and ceremonies, and removes all doubts about the excellence of the Buddha, his teachings, and his Saṅgha, when he becomes a *srota-āpanna* (i.e. on the stream to *nirvāṇa*). Then, through ethical and meditational practices, he reduces to the minimum his attachment (*rāga*), aversion (*dveṣa*), and delusion (*moha*), when he is said to have reached the second stage, *sakṛdāgāmin*. And on the complete removal of these three, he attains the third stage, *anāgāmin*. On attaining perfection in *prajñā*, i.e. realization of the Truth as envisaged by the Hīnayānists, he becomes an *arhat*, the perfect. There are, thus, according to them, four stages: first the *pṛthagjana* (commoner's stage), then perfection in *śīlas*, followed by perfection in *citta* (meditations), and lastly acquisition of *prajñā* (knowledge).

If we now turn to the scheme chalked out by the Mahāyānists, it will be observed how closely they followed the plan of the Hīnayānists. In the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* of Asaṅga and the Prajñāpāramitā texts, as also in the *Mahāvastu*, the pre-spiritual stage is called *prakṛti-caryā* (practices of an average being), subdivided into *gotra-vihāra*, i.e. functions normally taken up by the superior type of beings, and *adhimukti-caryā-vihāra* or the development of the desire to attain the highest state, *buddhatva*, and, for its achievement, to dedicate his several existences to the service of others.

After *prakṛti-caryā*, the *bodhisattva* takes to *adhiśīla-vihāra*, in which he renders service to his spiritual preceptor, cultivates the moral practices, discards sins, eschews the Śrāvakayāna teachings, and takes wholeheartedly to the Mahāyānic faith and ideals. The next stage is termed *adhicitta-vihāra*, in which the *bodhisattva* attains complete control over his mind through lower and higher meditations and other similar exercises. At the

same time, he develops compassion for the afflicted beings of the world, sacrifices his possessions for their good, and goes to any length of sufferings for acquisition of knowledge. After *adhicittas*, the *bodhisattva* takes up *adhiprajñā-vihāra*, in which he attains perfection in the thirty-seven *bodhi-pakṣīya dharmas*, penetrates into the four truths and the causal law, and realizes *śūnyatā* (essencelessness), *animitta* (non-perception of characteristics of objects), and *apraṇihita* (freedom from desire for perceived objects). He tries to remove from his mind the notion of duality, such as the knower and the known, existence and non-existence, and so forth. He acquires knowledge of all possible arts and crafts and carries on his mission of giving relief to the distressed and guiding people to the right path. With this *vihāra*, ends the agreement of the Mahāyānic and Hīnayānic stages of spiritual progress. The four stages dealt with above have been divided into six *bhūmis* in the *Daśabhūmika-Sūtra* and other texts.

The higher Mahāyānic practices commence after *adhiprajñā-vihāra*, i.e. in the seventh *bhūmi* of the *Daśabhūmika-Sūtra*. Henceforward the *bodhisattva* continues the practice of the four *brahma-vihāras*, viz. *maitrī* (friendliness), *karuṇā* (compassion), *muditā* (joy at others' success), and *upekṣā* (equanimity), tries to realize the substancelessness (*nairātmya, niḥsattva*) and non-duality (*advaya*) of all objective existences, which appear to him as echo or mirage, and strives to visualize the cosmic body of the Buddha. He follows the ways of the world, but remains dissociated from them. He now goes beyond the *śrāvaka* and *pratyeka-buddha* stages.

In the eighth *bhūmi*, he acquires the knowledge of sameness (*tathatā*) of all objects, gives up all thought-constructions, and is thoroughly convinced of the non-origination of all worldly objects (*anutpattika-dharma-kṣānti*). He then acquires the special powers of the *buddhas*. He makes a show of observing the rules of conduct. He is almost omniscient, having a detailed analytical knowledge of everything.

In the ninth *bhūmi*, the *bodhisattva* develops the faculty of minutely observing the mental inclinations of different beings and gets himself ready to devise ways and means (*upāya-kauśalya*) for helping them in their spiritual acquisitions, i.e. he now perfects himself for the task of a preacher of the Truth.

In the tenth or the last *bhūmi*, he becomes omniscient, perfect in all meditational exercises. He is then possessed of the resplendent body from which issue forth rays of light to illuminate the whole universe and to make all beings happy. It is also called the *abhiṣeka-bhūmi*, for at this stage he is consecrated as a *buddha*, a *tathāgata*.

In the above account of the spiritual progress of a *bodhisattva*, it will be observed that, apart from the altruistic functions of the *bodhisattva*,

there is fundamentally little difference between the practices prescribed for the *bodhisattvas* and those of the *śrāvakas*. Both of them have got to develop certain mental states in order to go beyond the stage of an average being, and then they have to purify themselves in acts and speech (*śīla* in Hīnayāna, *adhiśīla* in Mahāyāna), acquire complete control over mind (*citta* or *samādhi* in Hīnayāna, *adhicitta* in Mahāyāna), and, lastly, they must acquire an analytical knowledge of the constituents of a being or of the world (*prajñā* in Hīnayāna, *adhiprajñā* in Mahāyāna). On completion of these three, the *bodhisattvas*, like the *śrāvakas*, attain *nirodha* (removal) of *kleśāvaraṇa* (veil of impurities). In the next four higher stages, the *bodhisattvas* acquire the special powers of a *buddha*, realize sameness of all phenomenal objects, and prepare themselves as teachers of the world. Thus, it will be apparent that the Mahāyānists maintained *in toto* the spiritual career of the *śrāvakas* up to the removal of *kleśāvaraṇa*, and then added the four higher stages for the realization of *tathatā* or *dharma-śūnyatā*, through the removal of *jñeyāvaraṇa* (the veil which covers the Truth).

MAHĀYĀNA LITERATURE

Though the Mahāyānists do not dispute the authenticity of the Hīnayāna Tripiṭaka, they have produced quite a voluminous literature for propagating their new ideals and teachings. Most of the earlier texts are attributed to the Buddha, who delivered the discourses at Gṛdhrakūṭa only. Each text is introduced by the words '*Evaṁ mayā śrutaṁ*' (Thus have I heard), and the audience consists not only of *bodhisattvas*, but also of distinguished *śrāvakas* and lay-devotees. Extreme exaggeration of everything seems to be the common characteristic of the discourses, and the number of *buddhas*, *bodhisattvas*, *lokadhātus*, etc. runs to incalculable millions, the usual term for which is '*Gaṅgānadīvālukāsama*' (equal to the sands on the banks of the Gaṅgā). A remarkable feature of the earlier Mahāyāna texts is that these reproduce all the *dharmas* dealt with in the Hīnayāna Piṭaka, only to show that they are useful to a certain extent, but when the *bodhisattvas* go beyond the Hīnayāna *bhūmis*, they should regard them as unreal as the mirage and should give no thought to them.

The basic text of the Mahāyānists is the *Prajñāpāramitā-Sūtra*, of which there are several versions, large, medium, and small, but all harp on the same theme, viz. *dharma-śūnyatā*. The earliest Chinese translation of one of the versions of this Sūtra was made in the first century A.D., if not earlier. Next in antiquity to this Sūtra may be placed the *Aparimitāyus-Sūtra* or *Sukhāvatī-vyūha*, which contains an account of Amitābha and his paradise. The *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka-Sūtra*, which is also an old text, wants to

establish that the *śrāvakas* have made some progress spiritually, but they need further training for the realization of the highest Truth; most of the distinguished *śrāvakas* are given the hope that in the long run they would attain *bodhi* and become *buddhas*.

The largest number of Mahāyāna texts was translated into Chinese during the Western Tsin Dynasty (A.D. 265-316). Of these, *Daśabhūmika-Sūtra* and *Samādhirāja-Sūtra* are the two outstanding treatises, the former dealing with the ten stages of spiritual advancement of a *bodhisattva*, and the latter with the conception of the highest meditation, leading to the realization of *śūnyatā*. The work of Chinese translation of Mahāyāna texts continued for a thousand years more. The Tibetans also did not lag behind, though they started their work of translation much later than that of the Chinese.

The Mahāyānists attached undue importance to magical spells and charms, and these were collected together in many treatises, called Dhāraṇīs. In the early Mahāyāna texts, the *bodhisattvas* are given credit for mastering the Dhāraṇīs. The spells generally consist of a string of words, meaningless in many instances, and are supposed to give protection from evils, and to produce any desired effect. The Dhāraṇīs were not unknown to the Hīnayānists, who had also a few protective spells (*parittas*), and very probably these were only Buddhist modification of spells and charms of the Atharva-Vedic or pre-Atharva-Vedic days. In Mahāyānism, the Dhāraṇīs occupied an important place, and, in course of time, these overshadowed the ethical and philosophical works.

To sum up: It has been shown that even in the early texts of the Tripiṭaka there are passages which admit of Mahāyānic interpretation that the ultimate Truth is the indeterminate unity underlying the universe and that all existences in the phenomenal world are unreal. But such passages are few and far between in the Piṭakas, and some of them may be regarded as interpolations of a later date. A century after the Buddha's death appeared the Mahāsaṅghikas, whose offshoots, the Lokottaravādins and the Vetulyakas, appearing about half a century later, introduced the docetic conception of the Teacher and popularized the career of a *bodhisattva*. The Theravādins and the Sarvāstivādins incorporated the *bodhisattva* conception into their doctrines, reserving, however, the Bodhisattvahood for the previous existences of Gautama Buddha only, and produced for its elucidation the Jātaka and Avadāna literature. The growth of this literature took place in the post-Aśokan period, between the first and second century B.C., when the Sanchi and Bharhut railings were put up with carvings of some of the Jātaka and Avadāna scenes. It was about this time that the *bodhi-*

sattva conception was converted by the Mahāyānists into a cult and given a place in their scheme of salvation.

As regards the time of emergence of the doctrine of *dharma-śūnyatā*, it may with confidence be stated that it was first propounded in the Prajñāpāramitā texts. As the earliest Chinese translation of one of these texts was made in the first century A.D., if not earlier, it may be taken for granted that the original Prajñāpāramitā texts were composed at least in the first century B.C.

In the Tibetan traditions, it is recorded that some *bodhisattvas* were present in Kaniṣka's Council and that about this time some monks were preaching the theory of the non-origination of all phenomenal objects (*anutpattika-dharma-kṣānti*). This particular term appears repeatedly in the *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka* as an alternative term of *dharma-śūnyatā*. Hence, the Tibetan traditions corroborate the fact that the conception of *dharma-śūnyatā* was in vogue about the first century B.C.

The conception of *bodhisattva's* progress through ten *bhūmis* appeared some time later as the date of the *Daśabhūmika-Sūtra* cannot be placed earlier than the second century A.D., but there is no doubt that a vague conception of the *bhūmis* was in existence at the time of the Prajñāpāramitā texts. This conception was concretized in the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* and developed in the *Daśabhūmika-Sūtra*.

Geographically speaking, Mahāyānism had its origin in the South, whence it spread to the eastern countries, and then it prospered in the North. This statement, found in an early text like the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā*,[15] is significant. The Mahāsaṅghikas and their offshoots, who were the fore-runners of Mahāyāna, had their principal centre in the Guntur District, around Amaravati and Nagarjunikonda *stūpas*, and it is apparent that these sects paved the way for the advent of Mahāyāna ideals and doctrines. From Guntur, its way northwards lay through the eastern countries like Orissa, Bengal, and Bihar, and evidently from these countries the preachers proceeded northwards, and propagated widely the new teaching in the second or first century B.C.

[15] *Ime khalu punaḥ Śāriputra ṣaṭ-pāramitā pratisaṁyuktāḥ sūtrāntās-tathāgatasyātyayena Dakṣiṇāpathe pracariṣyanti. Dakṣiṇāpathāt punareva Vartanyāṁ pracariṣyanti. Vartanyāḥ punaruttarāpathe pracariṣyanti . . . Śāriputra āha, iyam api Bhagavan Prajñāpāramitā evaṁ gambhīrā paścime kāle paścime samaye vaistārikī bhaviṣyaty-uttarasyāṁ diśyuttare digbhāge* (*Aṣṭasāhasrikā*, p. 225).

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MAHĀYĀNIC PANTHEON

IN Hīnayāna or Primitive Buddhism, there was no pantheon worth the name. But in Mahāyāna a large number of deities was included, and later, in its more advanced form of Vajrayāna, this pantheon became surprisingly large with deities of every description. Virtually, there was a plethora of deification in which every philosophical dogma, ritualistic literature, abstract idea, human quality—even sleeping, yawning, and sneezing—was given the form of a deity.

DEITY: ITS EVOLUTION AND VISUALIZATION

The process of the evolution of the deity is described in Tāntric works, where clear-cut statements are made on the origin of the deities and their gradual evolution from the germ-syllable (*bīja*). In the *Advayavajra-saṅgraha,* it is said: 'The form of the deity is an expression of the *śūnya.* Such expressions are by nature non-existent. Wherever there is an expression, it must be *śūnya* in essence.'[1]

In another place in the same book it is declared: 'From the right perception of *śūnyatā* proceeds the germ-syllable; from the germ-syllable proceeds the conception of an icon; and from the icon, its external representations. The whole process therefore is one of dependent origination.'[2]

The deities are connected with *sādhanā* and *siddhi*, and the conception of godhead therefore is essentially spiritual or psychic. *Sādhanā* is concerned with the procedure for worshipping a particular deity. It consists in meditation in a quiet place and practising *yoga* till a state similar to deep sleep, but with inner awareness, is brought about. In this state, the *sādhaka* (ascetic) communes with the infinite Spirit, or the inexhaustible storehouse of energy, which is supposed to be the highest creative principle behind the world structure. By this communion, the ascetic draws forth energy from that inexhaustible source and becomes powerful himself. This process of the realization of the infinite Spirit is what is called *sādhanā*. The deity is a part of this psychic process.

The difficult psychic process of visualization of the deity is described

[1] *Sphūrtiśca devatākārā niḥsvabhāvāḥ svabhāvataḥ ;*
Yathā yathā bhavet sphūrtiḥ sā tathā śūnyatātmikā.
—*Advayavajra-saṅgraha* (Gaekwad's Oriental Series, 1927), p. 51.

[2] *Śūnyatā bodhitobījaṁ bījād-bimbaṁ prajāyate ;*
Bimbe ca nyāsavinyāsau tasmāt sarvaṁ pratītyajam.
—*Ibid.*, p. 50.

in detail in the *Guhyasamāja Tantra* (Tantra of Secret Communion),[3] which may be called the Bible of the Tāntric Buddhists. When the *bodhicitta* or the individual Self commingles with *śūnya* or the infinite Spirit in the highest state of meditation, the mind-sky is filled with innumerable visions and scenes, until, at last, the individual visualizes letters or germ-syllables, like sparks, which gradually assume the shape of deities, first indistinct, then changing into perfect, glorious, and living forms, the embodiments of the Infinite. They appear bright, effulgent, gorgeous, and divinely beautiful in form, ornaments, and dress. Ferocious deities, in like manner, appear before him in the most fearful form conceivable, with dishevelled hair, protruding eyes, bare fangs, violent and frightful weapons and dress, and decked in ornaments made of human bones, skulls, and severed heads. The forms so visualized, both benign and ferocious, are known as *devatās* (deities), and, once realized, the deity never leaves the *sādhaka*, but becomes instrumental in bestowing on him more and more psychic and spiritual powers.

EQUIPMENT FOR REALIZATION

The Tantras are, in fact, sciences (*vidyā*) dealing with psychic matters, and give directions for a variety of psychic exercises, requiring competent preceptors and efficient disciples. Like all other sciences, the Tantra is not open to all and sundry, but only for those who are initiated into the mysteries of the science, and are competent to follow the prescribed practices with patience and zeal. These are the *adhikārins* (rightful persons) for Tāntric practices.

In many Tāntric works, long chapters are devoted to the qualifications of the preceptors and disciples, and there are also rules for their respective competence to give or receive initiation. First of all, the neophyte must be patient, enduring, devoted, and sincere ; he must serve the preceptor with whole-hearted devotion. He should be proficient in the art of *yoga* and *haṭhayoga*, without which it is not possible to proceed with any *sādhanā* worth the name or with any difficult Tāntric practice.

We shall now turn to the views of the *Guhyasamāja* regarding the principles of deity-realization, and the various experiences through which the *sādhaka* has to pass before the deity is realized. The *Guhyasamāja* calls this process *upāya* (means), which is recognized as of four kinds—*sevā*, *upasādhanā*, *sādhanā*, and *mahāsādhanā*. *Sevā* (worship) is subdivided into two, namely, *sāmānya* (ordinary) and *uttama* (excellent). Of these two, the *sāmānya sevā* (ordinary worship) consists of four *vajras*: first, the conception

[3] Gaekwad's Oriental Series, 1931, XVIII. pp. 162-65.

of *śūnyatā*; second, its transformation into the form of the germ-syllable; third, its evolution in the form of a deity; and the fourth, the external representation of the deity. In the *uttama sevā* (excellent worship), *yoga*, with its six limbs, should be employed. These six limbs are: *pratyāhāra*, *dhyāna*, *prāṇāyāma*, *dhāraṇā*, *anusmṛti*, and *samādhi*.

Pratyāhāra is here described as the process by which the sense-organs are controlled.

Dhyāna is explained as the conception of the five desired objects (*pañca-kāmas*) through the five Dhyānī Buddhas, namely, Vairocana, Ratnasambhava, Amitābha, Amoghasiddhi, and Akṣobhya. This *dhyāna* is again subdivided into five kinds: *vitarka*, *vicāra*, *prīti*, *sukha*, and *ekāgratā*.

Prāṇāyāma is the control of the breathing process by which breath, which is of the nature of the five *bhūtas* (elements) and the five kinds of knowledge,[4] and is like a bright gem, is drawn from inside and placed as a lump at the tip of the nose, and is meditated upon.

Dhāraṇā is the meditation of one's own *mantra* in the heart, and the placing of it in the centre of the *prāṇabindu* after restraining the jewel of sense-organs (mind). When this is done, *nimittas* (signs) make their appearance. These signs are of five kinds, and appear in succession. First is the sign of *marīcikā* (mirage), the second is that of smoke, the third of fire-flies, the fourth of light, and the fifth takes the form of a luminous and cloudless sky.

Anusmṛti is the constant meditation of the object for which the psychic exercise is undertaken, and by this *pratibhāsa* (revelation) takes place.

After commingling the two elements, *prajñā* (knowledge) and *upāya* (means), the whole objective world should be conceived as concentrated in the form of a lump, and this should be meditated upon in the *bimba* (icon form). By this process, the transcendental knowledge suddenly bursts upon the worshipper, and is known as *samādhi*.

For the purpose of visualization, it is necessary that the process should be continued for six months, and this should be done, according to the *Guhyasamāja*, always while enjoying all kinds of worldly objects. If within six months the deity does not show itself, the process should be repeated thrice, while following the rules of restraint duly prescribed. If the deity is not visualized even with this, one should take recourse to the practice of *haṭhayoga* for the purpose. By this *yoga*, the *sādhaka* most certainly attains the knowledge of the deity.

The above description incidentally shows the part played by *rājayoga* and *haṭhayoga* in the process of realization of the deity. It shows also that

[4] The *Guhyasamāja* does not explain the five kinds of knowledge, but it is probable that it relates to the knowledge of the five Dhyānī Buddhas representing the five elements.

Tantra begins where *yoga* ends. Therefore the worshippers of the deity must be first adepts in *yoga* before they make an attempt to follow the more advanced science of the Tantras, which, obviously, is not meant for ordinary people.

The ascetic who visualizes a particular deity generally makes it a rule to describe the deity and the particular process, the *sādhanā,* by which this visualization took place for the benefit of his disciples, in order that they may realize the deity in the easiest and the most efficient manner. The *sādhanās* become less or more difficult according to the mental capacity of the worshippers, who are generally classified as high, middling, or low. The regulation of life, in the case of the worshippers of different classes, becomes more or less stringent according to the degree of psychic excellence.

REASON FOR LARGE NUMBER OF GODS AND GODDESSES

The individual soul is known in Buddhism as the *bodhisattva* or *bodhicitta,* while the infinite or the universal Soul is called *śūnya.* When they combine in the state of the highest meditation and concentration, an artificial condition, in a way akin to deep sleep, is brought about, and the deity appears in the mind-sky in flashes and sparks. The nature of the *bodhicitta* being finite, it is not possible to realize the Infinite in its entirety, that is to say, the result of the mystic experience of the *bodhicitta* also remains finite. And as the object for which the worshipper sits in meditation is different in different cases, the deity visualized also becomes different. It is the *bhāvanā* (desire) of the worshipper, which is of the nature of a psychic force, that reacts on the infinite Energy, giving rise to different manifestations according to the nature of the reaction. The nature of this reaction is of illimitable variety, and thus the resultant deity also appears in an infinite variety of forms, and this is the chief reason why we find large number of gods and goddesses in the pantheons of both the Buddhists and the Hindus.

THE WORSHIPPER, THE DEITY, AND THEIR IDENTITY

In the realization of the deity, there are thus three elements, the worshipper, the deity, and their connection or identity. These are named in the Tāntric works as the *bodhicitta,* the *mantrapuruṣa,* and the *ahaṅkāra.* The worshipper is nothing but a *bodhisattva,* the 'essence of enlightenment'; and when he worships, he becomes a *bodhicitta* with a 'will to enlightenment'. The deity is the embodiment of the cluster of letters which are dynamized by excessive concentration and repetition. The sacred words or letters set up strong vibrations and ultimately condense themselves in the form of deities, and this is called the *mantrapuruṣa* or '*mantra*-person'. But before the

'*mantra*-person' is visualized, there must always be a complete identity between the *bodhicitta* and the *mantrapuruṣa*.

THE VAJRAYĀNA CONCEPTION OF BODHICITTA

The Vajrayāna conception of the *bodhicitta* appears to be the same as advocated in the Yogācāra school, an idea of which can be had by a reference to the *Tattva-saṅgraha*[5] of Śāntarakṣita. The *bodhicitta*, according to this school, is something like a continuous stream of consciousness which changes every moment, the consciousness of the previous moment giving rise to or causing the consciousness of the succeeding moment. This chain of momentary consciousness, without a beginning or an end, operating in unison with the all-powerful act-force, leads it to either degradation or emancipation, according as the actions done are good or bad. The *bodhicitta* is by nature surcharged with impurities, such as desire, memory, existence, non-existence, subject, object, etc., which are all unreal. To purify this chain of consciousness is the sole aim of the *bodhisattva*, but so long as impurities are not removed, he will be subject to a series of transmigrations either in the world of gods or of men, or even of animals, birds, ghosts, and demons.

According as the impurities are removed one after another, the *bodhicitta* commences an upward march in the different spiritual spheres, called *bhūmis*, and stays in them only so long as it is not qualified to ascend to a higher sphere. The number of *bhūmis* is recognized generally as ten, and the work which describes them is called the *Daśabhūmika-Sūtra*.[6] When the *bodhicitta* is emancipated, or, in other words, when it crosses the ten *bhūmis* mentioned above, it is endowed with omniscience.

The Vajrayānist conception is the same as above, and it defines *bodhicitta* as that mind where *śūnya* and *karuṇā* (compassion) work in unison.[7] In the eye of a Vajrayānist, the external world has much the same significance as it appears in Yogācāra. The Tantras characterize the external world, with its movable and immovable objects like the pot, picture, carriage, house, mountains, and the rest, as reduced by reason to mere appearances, in much the same way as objects seen in a magic or dream are considered to be appearances. Therefore the Vajrayānists held that external objects have no more reality than mirage, shadow, or dream, and their reality cannot be proved by reason.

[5] Gaekwad's Oriental Series (1937-39), Introduction, p. xli, and f.n.1.

[6] The work, edited by J. Rahder, gives the names (p. 5) of the ten *bhūmis* as (1) *pramuditā*, (2) *vimalā*, (3) *prabhākarī*, (4) *arciṣmatī*, (5) *sudurjayā*, (6) *abhimukti*, (7) *dūraṅgamā*, (8) *acalā*, (9) *sādhumatī*, and (10) *dharmameghā*.

[7] Compare, for instance, the statement of Indrabhūti in the *Jñānasiddhi* (Gaekwad's Oriental Series, 1929, p. 75): *Śūnyatā-karuṇābhinnaṁ bodhicittamiti smṛtam*.

MANTRAS AND THEIR POWER

The *mantras* or mystic syllables constitute the backbone of Vajrayāna worship, and are of illimitable varieties. The *mantras* are mostly unmeaning words, but they sometimes disclose the influence of now unknown languages. The Vajrayānists maintain that the *mantras* are endowed with great powers, and can even confer Buddhahood or omniscience. The merits that accrue from the repetitions of the *mantra* of Mahākāla are so numerous that all the *buddhas* taken together cannot count them. The *mantra* of Ekajaṭā is said to be so powerful that the moment it is uttered a man becomes free from danger, he is always followed by good fortune, and his enemies are all destroyed. The repetition of the *mantra* is, however, to be done with the greatest care; for instance, it should not be muttered too quickly nor too slowly. The mind, at the time of repetition, should be completely concentrated on the letters of the *mantra*, should be free from all evil thoughts, and the *mantra* must not be repeated when the mind is agitated or tired.[8]

Thus it can be seen that the Vajrayānists believed that the *mantra* was endowed with dynamic power. Its power consisted in the arrangement of the syllables, the accuracy of which is to be guarded with the greatest care. It is required to be received with proper ceremonies from a competent preceptor. The *mantra* is powerful when it comes from a preceptor who is pure, and has repeated it continuously so as to visualize the '*mantra*-person' or the deity sacred to the *mantra*. The words of the *mantra* can only be dynamized by continual repetition by day and night until the deity is visualized. When the *mantra* becomes powerful, the vibrations let loose by the worshipper react on the universal *śūnya*. The *śūnya* expresses in consequence in the divine form of the deity which appears in his mind-sky. According as the calling signal is different in different cases, the deity becomes different, and thus the number increases. The deities therefore are nothing but the forms created by the force of word-vibrations, and so they cannot be said to be the products of a superstitious mind. To say the least, the *mantra* idea is logically sound and psychologically profound.

IDENTITY OF BODHICITTA AND ŚŪNYA

The relation between the caller and the called deity is one of identification. It is called *ahaṅkāra*[9] or the identity of the *bodhicitta* with the deity, the manifestation of *śūnya* or the ultimate Reality. The identity is estab-

[8] For more details and references, see *Sādhanamālā* (Gaekwad's Oriental Series), II. Introduction, pp. lxvi-lxxiii.
[9] Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 317: *Bhagavatīṁ vibhāvya dṛḍha ahaṅkāraṁ kuryāt.*

lished by the *mantra*: 'I am the goddess and the goddess is in me.'[10] The worshipper should conceive himself as the deity with the same complexion, form, and limbs as described in the Sādhana and should, instead of worshipping any external object, worship himself. The *bodhicitta* and the deity apparently signify duality, but their duality disappears with enlightenment. The *bodhicitta* is of the nature of *śūnya*, and the deity is a manifestation of *śūnya*, and therefore both have the same origin. But to realize that the two are identical requires perfect knowledge. Continuous meditation and austerities enable the worshipper to shed the veil of ignorance, which makes one thing appear as two.

The *bodhicitta* is further called *karuṇā* and the ultimate Reality, *śūnyatā*, and the commingling of the two is called *advaya*[11] or non-duality. As copper leaves its dirty colour (and becomes gold) when it comes in contact with the magic tincture (of alchemy), the body leaves off its attachment, hatred, etc. when it comes in contact with the tincture of *advaya*. This *advaya* is a form of cognition where the *bodhicitta* commingles with *śūnya* and becomes one with it. To symbolize this principle, Vajrayāna brought in the conception of the *yab-yum* (*yuganaddha*) forms of deities in which they appear closely locked in embrace with their Śaktis or female counterparts. When the deity is single, it means the female counterpart has merged into the deity even as salt melts in water. The deity is *śūnya*, and the female principle is *bodhicitta*; or the first is the ultimate Reality and the female is *karuṇā* or compassion. The *bodhicitta* can become ultimate Reality through the principle of *karuṇā*. This *karuṇā* is symbolized in the form of Avalokiteśvara, the great compassionate Bodhisattva, who sacrificed his *nirvāṇa* in order to serve his fellow-men.

In this account, even a casual observer can find that the Vajrayānists formulated the principle that behind the creation there is an indomitable will which multiplies itself in the form of letters, which gradually become condensed in the form of the deity. The female counterpart is the result of a further grossening or condensation of the same process. This is the creative process, the process of evolution. This process can only be stopped by the principle of *karuṇā*, which enables the *bodhicitta* gradually to soar higher and become subtler, till all duality disappears before it merges in *śūnya*.

GODS IN PRE-TANTRIC BUDDHISM

The varied, extensive, and diversified pantheon of the Buddhists of the North owes its origin to Tāntric Buddhism or Vajrayāna, and it is

[10] Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 318: *Yā Bhagavatī Prajñāpāramitā sāhaṁ, yo'haṁ sā Bhagavatī Prajñāpāramitā.* For details, see Introduction, pp. lxxvi-lxxviii.

[11] For further details, see *Ibid.*, Introduction, pp. lxxviii-lxxx.

likely that Buddhism had no pantheon before Tāntricism was well established. In very early days, Buddhism recognized thirty-three gods of the Hindus, who were the residents of the Trāyastriṁśa heaven,[12] which is one among the different *rūpa* heavens. The Buddha did not believe in gods or in worship, and in the *Saundarananda*, we find him discouraging his half-brother Nanda, when he wished to touch his feet in token of worship. He told Nanda that he would not be in the least pleased by Nanda's taking the dust of his feet, but he would bless him if he would practise the precepts of the Saddharma (true *dharma*).[13] The Buddha was deified by the Mahāyāna school which considered him to be *lokottara* or superhuman.

In Buddhist art, too, we do not find any of the Buddha's images in the earlier schools like those of Sanchi or Bharhut, and it is surmised that the Graeco-Buddhists of Gandhāra were the first to carve out his image in stone. Before this time only his symbols, like the Bodhi-tree, his head-dress, his foot-print, etc., used to be represented, but his actual likeness was regarded as too sacred for the purpose of representation. Dr. Coomaraswamy, on the other hand, has shown that the Mathurā school of sculpture can have an equally strong claim to antiquity and probably for sculpturing the first image of the Buddha.

THE DHYANI BUDDHAS AND THEIR FAMILIES

A number of gods and goddesses are described in the *Mañjuśrī-mūlakalpa*, which is believed to have been written before *c.* A.D. 300. Again, in the *Prajñāpāramitā*, we meet with a description of an elaborate worship of the Buddha with diverse paraphernalia. But, even then, it is not certain that at this time the Buddhists had any conception of a well-defined and well-classified pantheon. It is in the *Guhyasamāja* that we find the idea of the Buddhist pantheon properly and systematically crystallized. We find in it, for the first time, the description of the five Dhyānī Buddhas, their *mantras*, their *maṇḍalas* (circles of deities), and their Śaktis or female counterparts. These Dhyānī Buddhas represent the five *skandhas* or elements of which the world is composed. They are the progenitors of five *kulas* (families) and are called the *kuleśas* (lords of families). The five *kulas* are *dveṣa* (hatred), *moha* (delusion), *rāga* (attachment), *cintāmaṇi*

[12] In Pali, the original word is 'Tāvatiṁso'. *Trayastriṁśa* is thirty-three. 'Trāyastriṁśa' is the heaven where the thirty-three gods reside.

[13] *Uttiṣṭha dharme sthita śiṣyajuṣṭe kiṁ pādayorme patitosi mūrdhnā,*
Abhyarcanaṁ me na tathā praṇāmo dharme yathaiṣā pratipattireva.
—*Saundarananda*, XVIII. 22.

(thought-gem), and *samaya* (convention), which conduce to the attainment of all desires as well as emancipation.[14]

The emanations or offsprings of these Dhyānī Buddhas constitute their families. By this method the Buddhists evolved a well-classified pantheon with its multiplicity of gods and goddesses, and when these were represented in art, their origin was indicated by showing on their head the miniature figure of the parental Dhyānī Buddha. Each deity was given various forms with two, four, six, eight, ten, twelve, sixteen, or even more hands and proportionately one head for every two hands. They were given different colours, different expressions, and different companions, according as they were worshipped in the different Tāntric rites, and according as they were required to discharge different functions—from curing a disease to the killing of an enemy. The artists had considerable liberty in executing the images of deities, and they introduced their own traditions and innovations. The votaries, too, in order to have their gods in more and more powerful forms, added extra hands, heads, and feet to suit their own ideas and fancies, and it is in this way that the deities increased to an amazing number.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PANTHEON

The *Guhyasamāja Tantra,* which is perhaps the first book inculcating Vajrayāna philosophy, is a product of *c.* A.D. 300, which is the time of Asaṅga.[15] Quite naturally, the Tantra could not get publicity as the public mind was not prepared to receive the revolutionary innovations introduced in it. Thus the *Guhyasamāja* went into private hands, and was handed down, through an unbroken chain of *gurus* and disciples, for three hundred years in the most secret manner possible. It obtained publicity through the teachings and mystic songs of the Buddhist Vajrācāryas in about the eighth century. This accounts for the absence of references to the pantheon in the general Buddhist literature of the period or in the works of the Chinese travellers who came to India to study the condition of Buddhism prevalent at that time.

Despite this, names of certain Buddhist gods and goddesses are met with in these writings, though they do not pertain to the well-classified pantheon referred to above. In the ***Sukhāvatī-vyūha,*** which was translated into Chinese between A.D. 148 and 170, Amitābha appears for the first time as the presiding deity of the Sukhāvatī or the Akaniṣṭha heaven, where he is

[14] *Dveṣa-mohastathā rāgaścintāmaṇi samayastathā ;*
Kulā hyete tu vai pañca kāma-mokṣa prasādhakāḥ.
—*Guhyasamāja*, p. 6.

[15] For a full discussion regarding the date of the *Guhyasamāja* and its connection with Asaṅga, see *Guhyasamāja*, Introduction, pp. xxxvii f. As Vasubandhu is reputed to be a brother of Asaṅga, see also a discussion on his date in *Tattva-saṅgraha*, Foreword, pp. lxvi ff.

believed to have brought into existence Avalokiteśvara. We should remember that the Vajrayāna works also characterize this heaven as the abode of all gods and goddesses. Two more gods, namely, Akṣobhya as a Tathāgata and Mañjuśrī as a Bodhisattva, are mentioned in a smaller recension of the same work, which was also translated into Chinese between A.D. 384 and 417. Fa-Hien (394-414) mentions the names of Mañjuśrī, Avalokiteśvara, and the future Buddha Maitreya, while Yuan Chwang (Hiuen-Tsang, A.D. 629-45) refers to the names of Avalokiteśvara, Hārītī, Kṣitigarbha, Maitreya, Mañjuśrī, Padmapāṇi, Vaiśravaṇa, Śākya Buddha, Śākya Bodhisattva, and Yama, together with such deified saints as Aśvaghoṣa, Nāgārjuna, Asaṅga, and others. I-Tsing (671-95) records the names of Avalokiteśvara, Amitāyus, Hārītī, the Catur-Mahārājikas, Maitreya, Mañjuśrī, and Yama, besides several others. Śāntideva (695-730) mentions, in his *Śikṣā-samuccaya,* the names of Akṣobhya and Siṁhavikrīḍita as Tathāgatas, Gaganagañja as a Bodhisattva, besides those of Cundā, Trisamayarāja. Mārīcī, Siṁhanāda, Mañjughoṣa, and many others.

The Tantras of the Buddhists got wide publicity after Śāntideva, and in the Tāntric works written after his time, all referred to the pantheon and described numerous gods, especially the Dhyānī Buddhas. The Sādhana literature which describes the forms of gods and the procedure for worshipping them was developed by the *mahāsiddhas,* Saraha, Nāgārjuna, Śabarī-pā, Anaṅgavajra, Indrabhūti, and several others.

IMAGES OF GODS IN THE DIFFERENT SCHOOLS OF SCULPTURE

When we study the images executed in the different schools of art, we arrive at the same conclusion that the Buddhist pantheon was not well developed before the Tantras got wide publicity in about the eighth century A.D. For instance, in the Gāndhāra school, besides the Buddha images, there are images of Jambhala, Kubera, Indra, Maitreya, Hārītī—the Indian Madonna—and her consort, along with the other unidentifiable Bodhisattva images. In the Mathurā school of sculpture, which was either contemporaneous with, or somewhat later than, the Gāndhāra school, we come across numerous Buddha and Bodhisattva images, and those of Kubera, the *yakṣas,* and the *nāgas.* The Mathurā school extended to the early Gupta period, and here, too, we do not find the later Buddhist gods, such as Avalokiteśvara, Mañjuśrī, and the like.

When we come to the Magadha school, which is later than the Mathurā, the position is otherwise. It includes the images at Sarnath, and those of Nalanda, Odantapuri, Kurkihar, Gaya, and such other places in Bihar. The most flourishing period of the Magadha school synchronizes with the reign of the Pāla kings of Bengal, and lasted till the Mohammedan conquest of

eastern India. In this school, we find a clear reference to the well-classified pantheon as conceived in Vajrayāna Buddhism. In most of the cases, there are figures of the five Dhyānī Buddhas on the halo round the head of the principal deity, as also images with miniature figures of Dhyānī Buddhas on the crown, to indicate the origin of the deity installed. Again, unlike the Mathurā and Gāndhāra schools, Buddha images are scarce in later schools of art, and the few that are found are in the semi-mythical *vajrāsana* posture, flanked by Avalokiteśvara and Maitreya on his two sides. In the Magadha school therefore, the Buddha partakes of the nature of the Dhyānī Buddha Akṣobhya, as is clear from the numerous Sādhanas dedicated to his worship.

The Bodhisattva images also are not so stereotyped as is the case with those in the Gāndhāra and Mathurā schools. The Magadha school is distinguished by its wide variety of images of gods and goddesses, and this will strike any student of iconography who pays a visit to the museums at Sarnath, Nalanda, Patna, or even at Calcutta, and goes round the extensive ruins of the Odantapuri Vihāra, situated near Bihar Sharif, a small railway station on the Light Railway that leads from Bakhtiyarpur to Rajgir. The same is the case with the ruins of Gaya, Kurkihar, Sahet Mahet, and Kasia. At Sarnath, we can see the images of Ṣaḍakṣarī-Lokeśvara, Mañjuśrī, Ucchuṣma-Jambhala, Vasudhārā, Tārā, Mārīcī, all the five Dhyānī Buddhas, and Vajrasattva—the sixth Dhyānī Buddha—, besides many others belonging to the Vajrayāna pantheon.

The Bengal school, which is contemporaneous with the Magadha school, is distinguished by the high quality of art it developed and for its beauty and deftness of execution. Its flourishing period ranged from the tenth century to the conquest of Bengal by the Mohammedans. Many of the specimens of this school are preserved in the museums at Calcutta, Dacca, Rajshahi, and the Vaṅgīya Sāhitya Pariṣad, and a large number of them are distributed in the Pargana Vikrampur, and in the districts of Dinajpur, Rajshahi, Birbhum, and in Comilla. In this school we come across many interesting and unique specimens of images belonging to Tāntric Buddhism. From this it becomes clear that the artists were acquainted with the descriptions of deities as given in the Sādhana literature, because the image and the *dhyāna*, as given in the Sādhana, agree most remarkably. In this school we find, among many others, the images of Heruka, Vasudhārā, Jambhala, Arapacana, Khasarpaṇa, Parṇaśabarī, Siṁhanāda, Mañjuvara, Aparājitā, Mahāpratisarā, Nairātmā, Ṣaḍakṣarī-Lokeśvara, Mahāśrī-Tārā, Khadiravaṇī-Tārā, and several others.[16]

[16] For details, see N. K. Bhattasali, *Iconography of Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculptures in the Dacca Museum* (Dacca, 1929); and R. D. Banerji, *Eastern Indian School of Mediaeval Sculpture* (Delhi, 1933).

The images of Buddhist deities found at Ajanta, Ellora, and in the cave-temples of western India give evidence of immature Tāntric development, and may be assigned to a period before the eighth century A.D., although some of the paintings and sculptures are of long antiquity. The Javanese artists seem to have been profoundly influenced by the Bengal school, and the images of gods and goddesses as found in the Borobudur temple show that they were acquainted with many deities of the Vajrayāna pantheon. As Vajrayāna was mainly a product of Bengal, it is probable that colonists carried their art and religion to Java and Indonesia by way of sea, probably from the seaport at Tāmralipti, or from other ports in Chittagong and Orissa. The Prajñāpāramitā image produced in the Javanese school is still regarded as one of the best specimens of eastern art, either ancient or modern.

After the disappearance of Buddhism from India, the priests of the well-known monasteries of Bengal and Magadha, who could save themselves from the sword of the Mohammedans, took refuge in Nepal, which is protected on all sides by the natural ramparts of the Himalayas, and kept Buddhism alive there. The Bengal school of art went with them, but it was soon modified into a typical Nepalese art, when image-making was taken up by the local artists. The excellence and the dreamy sweetness of the Bengal school could not be preserved by the Nepal artists, although specimens of really good art are not at all wanting in the Nepal school. The followers of Vajrayāna who went to Nepal converted a good many Newars of the land to Buddhism, and, to keep the tradition alive, sculptured innumerable images of gods and goddesses in stone, metal, and wood, overwhelming in their wealth and variety. It is curious to note that the origin of almost all the monasteries in Kathmandu and Patan date from the thirteenth century, which shows unmistakably that they started almost immediately after the Mohammedan conquest of Bengal.

The cumulative evidence of art, history, and literature leads us to suppose that the pantheon of the northern Buddhists was not widely known before the eighth century A.D., nor was its underlying philosophy, which may warrant the formation of a pantheon well developed before that time, although the origin of it was decidedly earlier. This may be due to the fact that the *Guhyasamāja*, which for the first time inculcated the doctrine of the five Dhyānī Buddhas and their families, was composed in secret, and transmitted in an occult manner for about three centuries. It is only in the *Sādhana* of Asaṅga that we meet with a definite reference to the five Dhyānī Buddhas and their families, and for that reason it is not improbable to connect Asaṅga with the introduction of the very *Guhyasamāja Tantra* itself. The subsequent writers only got a glimpse of what filtered through the

secret, but very popular, mystic organizations. After the eighth century, there was no necessity for secrecy any longer, as the principles of Vajrayāna were then well established and widely spread through the teachings and mystic songs of the eighty-four Siddhācāryas. Great men were found to advocate the cause of Vajrayāna, and chairs of Tantra were established in the different universities, such as Nālandā, Vikramaśila, and Jagaddala. At Nālandā, particularly, it is well known that Śāntarakṣita worked as a professor of Tantra.

EVOLUTION OF ĀDIBUDDHA VAJRADHARA

The pantheon of the northern Buddhists centres round the theory of the five Dhyānī Buddhas. The Buddhists hold that the world is composed of five elements or *skandhas*. They are: *rūpa* (matter), *vedanā* (sensation), *saṁjñā* (perception), *saṁskāra* (impression), and *vijñāna* (consciousness). These elements are eternal and have no beginning nor end, and were deified in Vajrayāna as the five Dhyānī Buddhas. In the course of time, they were regarded as the five primordial gods responsible for this diversified creation, and thus Vajrayāna took more or less a polytheistic form, although polytheism can hardly apply to a system which considers *śūnya* or the ultimate Reality to be composed of three elements, *śūnya*, *vijñāna*, and *mahāsukha*. But so long as *śūnya* could not obtain the form of a single deity as Vajradhara, the five Dhyānī Buddhas, as five primordial gods, certainly smacked of polytheism. The priests and Vajrayāna authors were conscious of this defect, especially in view of the fact that all the six systems of philosophy of the Hindus tended towards a highly monotheistic philosophy. They tried at first to cure this defect by the theory of *kuleśas*, or the progenitors of the *kulas* or families of gods and men, and thus divide everything into five groups. For each group, a particular Dhyānī Buddha became the *kuleśa*, or the primordial lord, all other groups taking their origin from him.

Another grand conception of theirs in this connection is the theory of the highest god Vajradhara or the Ādibuddha (the primordial monotheistic Buddha), who is the divine form of *śūnya* to whom even the Dhyānī Buddhas owe their origin. The theory originated in the Nālandā monastery in about the tenth century. Thereafter a large number of images of Vajradhara must have been made in the different schools of art. Vajradhara was particularly popular in Nepal and Tibet where numerous images of this primordial god are to be met with. According to Alexander Csoma de Körös, the conception of Ādibuddha originated at Nālandā in the beginning of the tenth century,[17] and no mention is made of Ādibuddha by any other

[17] *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* (1833), II. pp. 57 ff.

writer before that time. Homage is paid to Ādibuddha in the shape of a flame of fire, which is considered by the priests as eternal, self-born, and self-existent. The *Svayambhū Purāṇa* says that Ādibuddha first manifested himself in Nepal in the form of a flame of fire, and Mañjuśrī erected a temple over it in order to preserve it. This temple is known as the Svayambhū Caitya.

As the conception of Vajradhara presupposes Ādibuddha, it is later than the first half of the tenth century. The conception of Vajrasattva, being a regular development from that of Vajrapāṇi or the Bodhisattva emanating from the Dhyānī Buddha Akṣobhya, is a little earlier, although the conceptions of Vajradhara and Vajrasattva are sometimes inextricably mixed up. In Vajrayāna, Ādibuddha is regarded as the supreme deity of the Buddhist pantheon, the originator of even the Dhyānī Buddhas. When represented in human form, he is named Vajradhara, and is conceived in two forms, single and *yab-yum*.

When single, he is bedecked in jewels and gaudy ornaments and dress, sits in the *vajraparyaṅka* or the *dhyāna* attitude with the two feet interlocked and the soles turned upwards. He carries the *vajra* (thunderbolt) in the right hand, and the *ghaṇṭā* (bell) in the left, the two hands being crossed against the chest in what is called the *vajra-huṅkāra mudrā*. The *vajra* here is the symbol for *śūnya,* which is eternal and indestructible, while the *ghaṇṭā* represents *prajñā* or wisdom, the sound of which travels far and wide. Sometimes the symbols are shown on a lotus on either side, the *vajra* being on the right and the *ghaṇṭā* on the left.

In *yab-yum* pose, his form remains the same as when single, except that he is here locked in close embrace by his Śakti, whose name, according to Miss Getty, is Prajñāpāramitā. The Śakti is somewhat smaller in size, is richly dressed and bedecked in ornaments, carrying the *kartri* (knife) and the *kapāla* (skull cup) in the right and left hands, respectively. In these figures *kartri* is the symbol for the destruction of ignorance, the *kapāla* represents oneness absolute, while the double form of *yab-yum* signifies that the duality and non-duality are unreal, and they mix themselves into one as salt becomes one with water. The deity Vajradhara is the embodiment of *śūnya,* while Prajñāpāramitā represents *karuṇā,* and in close embrace they turn into one *śūnya,* where *karuṇā* merges.

But Vajradhara was not accepted on all hands as the Ādibuddha or the first creative Principle. When the theory of the Ādibuddha was firmly established, the Buddhists seem to have ranged themselves into many groups holding different views regarding his specific form. Some considered one among the five Dhyānī Buddhas as the Ādibuddha ; some acknowledged Vajrasattva as the Ādibuddha ; and, according to others, the Bodhisattvas,

such as Samantabhadra and Vajrapāṇi, were the Ādibuddhas. Thus the cult of Ādibuddha was distributed amongst the different theories and schools, which gave rise to different sects amongst the Tāntric Buddhists.

Vajradhara or the Ādibuddha is supposed to be the originator of the five Dhyānī Buddhas, who are the originators of the *kulas* or families of Buddhist gods and goddesses. Next to Vajradhara, the Dhyānī Buddhas or the Tathāgatas are important in Buddhist iconography, and will be dealt with next. The *Guhyasamāja Tantra* was the first to reveal their existence in a *saṅgīti* (holy assembly) which is supposed to introduce new ideas into Buddhism.

ORIGIN OF THE DHYANI BUDDHAS, THEIR CONSORTS, AND GUARDIANS OF GATES

In the *Guhyasamāja* the Dhyānī Buddhas are given a *mantra*, a colour, a Śakti, a direction, and a guardian of the gate. As these Dhyānī Buddhas are of primary importance, it is necessary to deal with their origin in some detail here. The *Guhyasamāja* opens in a grandiloquent style with the description of a large assembly of gods, Tathāgatas, Bodhisattvas, Śaktis, and various other divine beings.[18] The Tathāgatas present in the assembly requested the Lord Bodhicittavajra to define the *Tathāgata-maṇḍala* or the magic circle of the Dhyānī Buddhas, and in response the Lord sat in the *samādhi* called the *jñāna-pradīpa* (lamp of knowledge), and his whole form started resounding with the sacred sound of *vajradhṛk*, which is the principal *mantra* of the *dveṣa* family. No sooner did the word come out of the Lord than it took the form of Akṣobhya with the *bhūsparśa mudrā* (earth-touching pose).

When the Lord changed to another meditation, the word *jinajik*, the principal *mantra* of the *moha* family, came out of him, and gradually condensed into the form of Vairocana with the *dharmacakra mudrā* ('wheel of *dharma*' pose), and was placed in front (east) of him.

Next, with a third *samādhi*, the Lord became resonant with the word *ratnadhṛk*, the principal *mantra* of the *cintāmaṇi* family, and soon became grossened in the form of Ratnaketu (Ratnasambhava), with his favourite *mudrā* of *varada* (gift-bestowing), and was placed to the south of the Lord.

The Lord thereupon took a fourth *samādhi* and became resonant with the sacred sound of *ārolik*, which is the principal *mantra* of *vajrarāga* family; the vibrations soon grossened in the form of Amitābha with the *dhyāna mudrā* (meditative pose), and was placed behind (west) the Lord.

Next, the Lord assumed another *samādhi* and soon became resonant with the sacred sound *prajñādhṛk*, the principal *mantra* of the *samaya*

[18] Pp. 5-10. A summary account of the whole scene is given in the next few paragraphs.

family. The vibrations gradually took the deified form of Amoghasiddhi with his characteristic pose of *abhaya* (assurance), and was placed by the Lord to his north.

Then the Lord sat in a different set of five *samādhis* and became resonant with five different *mantras*. The vibrations soon condensed themselves into the forms of five goddesses as female counterparts of the five Tathāgatas already named, and were joined to them.

First, the Lord by *samādhi* became resonant with the sound *dveṣarati*, which transformed itself into the form of his own queen, and was placed on his own seat.

Next, he became resonant with the sound *moharati*, which took the shape of a goddess, and was placed in the eastern corner as the queen of Vairocana.

Thereafter, he became vibrant with the sound *īrṣyārati*, which took the form of a goddess, and was placed in the southern corner as the queen of Ratnasambhava.

Next, in another concentration, the Lord became vibrant with the formula *rāgarati*, which soon took the concrete shape of a goddess, and was placed on the western corner as the queen of Amitābha.

Then, in a further meditation, the Lord became resonant with the sound of the formula *vajrarati* which took the shape of a goddess, and was placed in the northern corner as the consort of Amoghasiddhi.

When all the five Tathāgatas were associated with their female counterparts, the Lord sat in four more meditations, when four guardians of gates for the four cardinal quarters took their origin.

When he took the *mahāvairocanavajra samādhi*, he became resonant with the sound vibrations of the formula *yamāntakṛt*, which soon assumed the shape of a ferocious deity, fearful to the Tathāgatas, and was placed at the eastern gate.

By the next concentration, he became vibrant with the sound of the formula *prajñāntakṛt*, which took the form of a ferocious deity, fearful to the *vajra* process, and was placed at the southern gate.

By another meditation, the Lord became resonant with the sound of the formula *padmāntakṛt*, which soon took the concrete shape of the ferocious deity representing the speech of the Tathāgatas, and was placed at the western gate.

Finally, the Lord assumed the meditation called the *kāya-vāk-citta-vajra* of the Tathāgatas and became vibrant with the sound of the formula *vighnāntakṛt*, which soon took the shape of a ferocious deity representing the body, speech, and the mind of the Tathāgatas, and was placed at the northern gate.

The above account, as recorded in the *Guhyasamāja*, marks the beginning of the theory of the five Dhyānī Buddhas, their female counterparts, their *mantras*, and the guardians of the gates. They are the progenitors of the five *kulas* or families of deities, and men worshipping them were known as *kaulas*, and the process of worship was called *kulācāra* or family conduct. These Dhyānī Buddhas grossen themselves in the form of Bodhisattvas and their female principles, who are responsible for creating everything found in existence.

The five Dhyānī Buddhas, who are the embodiments of the five *skandhas* (primordial elements), are the progenitors of the five families of deities constituting the whole of the Buddhist pantheon. The emanated deities from these five Dhyānī Buddhas, as a rule, hold a miniature figure of the parental Buddha on their heads. They are usually of the same colour as that of the Dhyānī Buddha from whom they emanate, and are placed in the same direction as is assigned to him.

The names, colours, and the symbols of the five Dhyānī Buddhas are given in the following verse occurring in the *Sādhanamālā*:

> *Jino Vairocano khyāto Ratnasambhava eva ca,*
> *Amitābh-Āmoghasiddhir-Akṣobhyaśca prakīrtitaḥ.*
> *Varṇā amīṣāṁ sitaḥ pīto rakto harita-mecakau,*
> *Bodhyaṅgī varado dhyānaṁ mudrā abhaya-bhūspṛśau.*

'The *jinas* (victorious ones) are Vairocana, Ratnasambhava, Amitābha, Amoghasiddhi, and Akṣobhya. Their colours are white, yellow, red, green, and blue; and they exhibit the *bodhyaṅgī* (teaching), *varada* (boon), *dhyāna* (meditation), *abhaya* (protection), and *bhūsparśa* (earth-touching) poses of hands, respectively.

The deities emanating from these Dhyānī Buddhas are legion, and can be classified under the five families, described below,[10] each presided over by one or the other of the five Dhyānī Buddhas.

THE DVEṢA FAMILY

The *dveṣa* family is presided over by Akṣobhya, who is mentioned as a Tathāgata in the smaller recension of the *Amitāyus-Sūtra*, which was translated into Chinese between A.D. 384 and 417. His colour is blue, and his *mudrā* is *bhūsparśa*. His direction is east, and his vehicle is a pair of elephants. His Śakti or female counterpart is Locanā, and his principal Bodhisattva is Vajrapāṇi.

[10] Detailed description of these deities is not called for here, since that belongs to the sphere of iconography. For details, see B. Bhattacharyya, *Indian Buddhist Iconography* (Oxford University Press, 1924).

A large number of gods and goddesses emanate from Akṣobhya, and these constitute the *dveṣa* family. Amongst the gods, mention may be made of Heruka, Hayagrīva, Yamāri, Caṇḍaroṣaṇa, Buddhakapāla, and Vajraḍāka. Amongst the goddesses, the chief ones are: Mahācīna-Tārā, Jāṅgulī, Ekajaṭā, Prajñāpāramitā, Vajracarcikā, Mahāmantrānusāriṇī, Mahāpratyaṅgirā, Dhvajāgrakeyūrā, and Nairātmā. In general, all deities having blue colour and assigned to the east and the Agni corner (south-east) in the *maṇḍalas* belong to this family.

THE MOHA FAMILY

The originator of the *moha* family is Vairocana, who is white in colour and shows the *dharmacakra mudrā*. His recognition symbol is a pair of discs, and his vehicle is a pair of dragons. His place is in the centre of the universe and is mostly represented in a *stūpa*. He is sometimes assigned a place between Akṣobhya in the east and Ratnasambhava in the south. His Śakti is Vajradhātvīśvarī and his Bodhisattva is Samantabhadra.

A large number of deities belong to this family. Among them the following deserve mention: Mārīcī, Uṣṇīṣavijayā, Sitātapatrā-Aparājitā, Mahāsāhasrapramardinī, Vajravārāhī, Kṣitigarbha, Kāminī, Kālarātri, Maitreya, and Rūpavajra. Besides these, all deities having white colour are to be assigned to this family.

THE RĀGA FAMILY

The progenitor of the *rāga* family is Amitābha, who is red in colour, exhibits the *samādhi* or the *dhyāna mudrā*, and presides over the western direction of the universe. His recognition symbol is the lotus, and his *vāhana* (vehicle) is a pair of peacocks. His Śakti is Pāṇḍarā and his Bodhisattva is Padmapāṇi.

Amongst the important deities of this family are: Lokeśvara, Mahābala, Saptaśatika-Hayagrīva, Kurukullā, Bhṛkuṭī, Mahāsitavatī, Amitaprabha, Bhadrapāla, Candraprabha, Jālinīprabha, Kapālinī, Mukundā, Mahodadhi, Maheśvara, and Nīladaṇḍa. Besides these, gods and goddesses with red colour and all others assigned to the western direction and to the Vāyu corner (north-west) also belong to this family.

THE CINTĀMAṆI FAMILY

The progenitor of the *cintāmaṇi* family is the Ratnasambhava, of yellow colour, exhibiting the *varada* or the gift-bestowing *mudrā*. His vehicle is a pair of lions, his Śakti is Māmakī, and his Bodhisattva is Ratnapāṇi. The direction of Ratnasambhava is south.

The principal members of this family are: Jambhala, Ucchuṣma-

Jambhala, Mahāpratisarā, Vasudhārā, Gandhavajrā, Gandhahastī, Gaganagañja, Jambukī, Jñānaketu, Khagarbha, Khaṇḍarohā, Lāsyā, Lāmā, Prajñāntaka, Pātālavāsinī, Puṣpā, Pratibhānakūṭa, the twelve Pāramitās, etc. Besides these, all gods and goddesses having yellow colour or placed in the south or in the Nairṛta corner (south-west) belong to the *cintāmaṇi* family.

THE SAMAYA FAMILY

The progenitor of the *samaya* family is Amoghasiddhi, of green colour with the hand raised in the attitude of assurance. He presides over the northern direction of the universe, and he faces north when represented on the *stūpa*. His recognition symbol is the *viśvavajra* or the double conventional thunderbolt, and his vehicle is a pair of *garuḍas*. His consort is Tārā, and his Bodhisattva, Viśvapāṇi. A large number of deities emanate from him, and among them we can notice the following: Khadiravaṇī-Tārā, Vaśya-Tārā, Sita-Tārā, Dhanada-Tārā, Parṇaśabarī, Mahāmāyūrī, Vajrasṛṅkhalā, Amitaprabhā, the twelve Dhāriṇīs, Gandha-Tārā, Gandhā-Karmavajrī, Mahābala, Murajā, Nṛtyā, Priyadarśanā, Rasavajra, Sparśavajrā, Viṣkambhin, Vighnāntaka, Vajrasaumya, Vajraghaṇṭā, and Vajragarbha. Besides these, all gods and goddesses having green colour, or occupying in a *maṇḍala* the northern direction or the Īśāna corner (north-east) belong to the *samaya* family.[20]

[20] Many of the deities named here in the five families are still unknown to the student of Buddhist iconography. These names are found in a Buddhist work entitled *Niṣpannayogāvalī* (Gaekwad's Oriental Series), which furnishes descriptions of more than 500 Buddhist deities, fairly accurately classified under appropriate *kuleśas* or Dhyānī Buddhas.

KARMA

KARMA is accepted as an article of faith in all the main systems of Indian philosophy and religion. According to the Buddhist tradition, an Indian teacher, who was a householder, propounded the doctrine of Karma before the advent of the Buddha,[1] who therefore did not originate it.

I. BRĀHMAṆIC DOCTRINE OF KARMA

The doctrine of Karma is not found in the earliest Vedic thought, but it appears in the Brāhmaṇas and the earliest Upaniṣads. It begins to appear in the Brāhmaṇas, but not in the *saṁsāra* shape of transmigration.[2] In Brāhmaṇic thought, the doctrine of Karma has been combined with that of transmigration, and this makes it possible to explain any apparently undeserved pleasure or pain of a person by the theory that the *karma* causing them was done by him in a former existence. This doctrine of Karma, i.e. acts and their retribution, gradually broke away from Vedic naturalism, mysticism, and piety.[3]

Karma is, according to the popular Hindu belief, nothing but an aggregate of man's actions in a former birth, which determines his unalterable future destiny. Its consequence is felt until it is exhausted through suffering or enjoyment. 'As a man himself sows, so he himself reaps; no man inherits the good or evil act of another man. The fruit is of the same quality as the action; and whether good or bad, there is no destruction of the action.' Hopkins points out that *karma* struck hard against the old belief in sacrifice, penance, and repentance.[4] This popular notion of *karma* is also found in a Buddhist birth-story called *Matakabhatta Jātaka*.[5] A clear formulation of the doctrine of Karma may be gathered from the teachings of Yājñavalkya as recorded in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*.[6] The Brāhmaṇic doctrine of Karma, as found in the teachings of Yājñavalkya, has been somewhat modified in Buddhism.[7]

Jāratkārava Ārtabhāga, another Upaniṣadic thinker, had a discussion with Yājñavalkya about the mysterious effect of *karma*.[8] The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* contains the gospel of *karma* which determines, on a man's death,

[1] *Majjhima Nikāya* (Pali Text Society, London), I. p. 483.
[2] Hopkins, *Religions of India* (Ginn & Co., Boston, 1902), p. 199.
[3] Hastings, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, VII. p. 673.
[4] *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1906), p. 583.
[5] V. Fausböll, *The Jātaka*, No. 18.
[6] III.2 13 ; IV.4.3-6.
[7] *Atthasālinī* (P.T.S., 1897), pp. 63 ff.
[8] *Bṛ. U.*, III.2.13.

the nature of his next birth. Yājñavalkya works out the view of *karma* thus: A man is of desire. As is his desire, so is his resolve. As is his resolve, so is his action. And as he acts, so he attains. In other words, a man attains with his action the object to which his mind is attached. After having enjoyed the full benefit of his deeds, he returns again from that world to this world of action.[9] Here Yājñavalkya and Ārtabhāga are found to praise *karma*. They therefore state jointly that one becomes virtuous by virtuous action and vicious by vicious action (*puṇyo vai puṇyena karmaṇā bhavati pāpaḥ pāpeneti*). *Karma* draws the soul back into a new corporeality. In the words of Yājñavalkya, 'As a caterpillar (grass-leech), after having reached the end of a blade of grass, and after having made an approach to another blade, draws itself together towards it, thus does his self, after having thrown off this body and dispelled all ignorance, and after making an approach to another body, draw itself together towards it. And as a goldsmith taking a piece of gold turns it into another newer and more beautiful shape, so does this self, after having thrown off this body and dispelled all ignorance, make unto itself another newer and more beautiful shape, whether it be like that of the Fathers, or of the *gandharvas*, or of the gods, or of Prajāpati, or of Brahmā, or of other beings'.[10]

The notion of metempsychosis is nicely depicted in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (V. 10). The various stages which one has to traverse after death, according to one's own *karma*, are elaborately dealt with in this particular section. Thus it is stated in this connection that those who are of good conduct will enter into an elevated (superior) womb, and those who are of evil conduct will be born into the womb of a dog or a swine or an outcast (V. 10. 7). In support of this the following may be cited: 'One who steals away gold, one who drinks liquor, one who ascends the bed of his teacher, one who kills a Brāhmaṇa—these four are destined to sink downward. So also happens with the fifth who keeps company with them' (V.10.9).

The doctrine of Karma has also been treated in the *Yoga-Sūtra* (II. 12, 13) and especially in its *bhāṣya*.

II. BUDDHIST DOCTRINE OF KARMA

The two extreme views of thought bearing upon the doctrine of Karma are thus recorded in Buddhism: (1) all that a being experiences in life is due to the sum-total of his past deeds; and (2) all that a being experiences in life is purely a matter of chance. Buddhism seeks to avoid these two extremes. The *Cūḷakammavibhaṅga-Sutta*,[11] addressed to Subha,

[9] *Ibid.*, IV.4.5, 6.
[10] *Ibid.*, IV.4.3-4.
[11] *Majjhima Nikāya*, III. pp. 203 ff.

a young Brāhmaṇa scholar, is highly important as formulating, in the clearest possible terms, the doctrine of Karma, which is substantially the same as that in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad.* The doctrine, as stated in the above Sutta, runs thus: 'The beings, O Brāhmaṇa youth, have the *karma* as their own, they have their heritage from the *karma,* the *karma* determines their birth, the *karma* is their friend and ultimate refuge, and it is the *karma* that divides them, relegating them either to the inferior or to the superior state of existence.'[12]

The *Devadūta-Sutta,*[13] addressed to the *bhikkhus,* bases the whole discourse on the doctrine of Karma on the current popular belief about Yama and his messengers, called *devadūtas,* or timely warnings. It represents Yama as the lord of the nether world, whose business it is to sit in judgement over the actions of different sinners, as they are brought to his court by his emissaries.

Thus the earlier trends of thought were recognized and explained also in Buddhism, but the question arises if such was precisely the Buddhist idea of *karma.* The Buddhist approached the problem from a purely psychological point of view.[14] A man need not be afraid of the vast accumulation of *karma* through a long cycle of births and rebirths, for all such accumulations of *karma* may be completely undone by a momentary action of mind. The Buddhist doctrine of Karma should not be misinterpreted as a sort of fatalism. It is broad-based on morality and the law of causation, and clearly explains the principle of just requital.[15]

MEANING OF KARMA IN BUDDHISM

On the whole, Buddhism shifted the emphasis from the action to the state of mind. Accordingly, *karma,* which generally means action or doing, has been defined in Buddhism as *cetanā* or volition.[16] It is along these lines that the Buddhist commentator Buddhaghoṣa also defines *karma.* According to him, *karma* means consciousness of good and bad, merit and demerit.[17] It is clear from this that an action is no action until the will is manifested in conduct. In the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* (V. 292 ff.), the Buddha is represented as saying, 'I declare, monks, that there can be no annulment of voluntary deeds (*sañcetanikā*) . . . without experience of the results

[12] *Kammassakā, māṇava, sattā kammadāyādā kammayonī kammabandhū kammapaṭisaraṇā. Kammaṁ satte vibhajati yadidaṁ hīṇappaṇītatāyā ti—ibid.*

[13] *Ibid.,* III. pp. 178-87.

[14] *Niddesa* (P.T.S., 1916), I. pp. 117, 118.

[15] See S. Tachibana's article: 'On Karma', published in *Buddhistic Studies* (Ed. B. C. Law, 1931), pp. 701 ff.

[16] '*Cetanāhaṁ bhikkhave kammaṁ vadāmi*'—*Aṅguttara Nikāya* (P.T.S.), III. p. 415; cf. *Atthasālinī,* pp. 88 ff.

[17] '*Kammaṁ nāma kusalākusalacetanā*'—*Visuddhi-magga* (P.T.S., 1920-21), II. p. 614.

thereof'. The Master is further said to have repeated, 'I declare, monks, volition to be action'.[18] Here, of course, volition as moral action without qualification was meant by the Master. Volition which is morally indeterminate is without moral results.[19] A state of *karma* is a unique determination of the will. Will-exercise has its power over its co-existent mental properties and physical qualities. In fact, all our activities in deed, word, or thought are due to its influence. A person cannot be held morally or legally responsible for any action of his or hers, if it is not intentional. Thus it is clear that *karma* has been defined on a rational and practical basis in Buddhism.

KINDS OF KARMA ACCORDING TO BUDDHISM

According to the Buddhists, *karma* is of four kinds—(1) action which produces result in this life (*diṭṭhadhammavedaniyaṁ*); (2) action which produces result in the next life (*upapaccavedaniyaṁ*); (3) action which produces result from time to time (*aparāpariyāyavedaniyaṁ*); and (4) past action (*ahosi-kammaṁ*). There is another classification of action—(1) determining the character of rebirth or reproductive action (*janaka*); (2) sustaining or maintaining action (*upatthambhaka*); (3) oppressive or unfavourable action (*upapīḷaka*); and (4) destructive action (*upaghātaka*). We have another fourfold division of *karma*—(1) an act, whether good or bad, which has a serious result; (2) excess of virtue or vice with the relevant consequence; (3) an act which is thought of at the time of death; and (4) an act which has been frequently done or often repeated by one in his lifetime and which, in the absence of the three previous *karmas*, causes rebirth.[20] According to the *Atthasālinī* (p. 88), which is a commentary on the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi*, *karma* is of three kinds—(1) bodily action (*kāyakamma*); (2) vocal action (*vacīkamma*); and (3) mental action (*manokamma*). Childers observes that these three originate in *cetanā* or will.[21] All these kinds of acts and consequences are manifested in their true aspect in the Buddha's knowledge of the consequences of *karma*.

CONSEQUENCES AND CONTINUITY OF KARMA

Those who have acquired spiritual insight come to know about *kammantara* and *vipākantara*.[22] *Karma* produces consequence, and retribution follows from action, which brings rebirth in its train. In this way, the

[18] *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, III. p. 415.
[19] B. C. Law, *The Debates Commentary* (Trans. P.T.S., 1940), p. 167.
[20] *Visuddhi-magga*, II. p. 601.
[21] Childers, *A Dictionary of the Pali Language* (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., London, 1909), p. 178.
[22] *Visuddhi-magga*, II. p. 602.

world goes on. All the factors of this diversified sentient organism, such as *karma* and *liṅga* (feature, idea, language, etc.) in the destinies of spirits, men, denizens of purgatories, lower animals, and the like, are accomplished by the mind. Various good and bad deeds are accomplished by the mind. Depending on the difference in *karma* appears the difference in the births of beings. Depending on the difference in *karma* appears the difference in the individual features of beings. Depending on the difference in *karma* appears the difference in the worldly conditions of beings, such as gain and loss, fame and disgrace, blame and praise, happiness and misery. By *karma* the world moves, by it men live, and by it all beings are bound up.[23] By *karma* one attains glory and praise, and by *karma* come bondage, ruin, and suffering. The world exists through *karma*, and people live through it.[24]

The doctrine of Karma, or the efficacy of good or bad deeds, is inseparably bound up with that of renewed existence. Buddhism which is essentially a doctrine of no-soul, teaches that no action passes from the past life to the present, nor from the present to the future.[25]

A careful study of the *Petavatthu*,[26] which contains stories of the departed spirits, helps us to learn the lesson which logically follows from the law of Karma, which is the central idea of the whole Buddhist faith. It is pointed out again and again that the result of *karma*, good or bad, cannot be obviated. It is a force which must produce its consequence, and this is impressed upon the minds of the followers of the faith.

According to Buddhism, the inhabitants of the heavens and hells as well as the dwellers upon this earth itself are subject to the inexorable law of Karma. It is clear from the Buddhist texts that, on account of meritorious deeds done on earth, people are reborn in heavens, and they enjoy heavenly comforts and pleasures. The highest of the pleasures that the Buddhist heavens bestow is not, however, everlasting. When the fruits of good deeds are exhausted, the beings have to come down again to the earth to be buffeted by the waves of *karma*, i.e. *puṇya* and *pāpa* (merit and demerit). On account of misdeeds done on earth, people are reborn in hells and are subjected to torments and sufferings. The stories of the *Peta*- and the *Vimāna-vatthus* fully explain and illustrate the Buddhist idea of *kammavipāka* or the consequence of one's own action.

According to the *Kathāvatthu*-commentary,[27] there is a relation between

[23] *Suttanipāta* (P.T.S., 1913), verse 654.

[24] *'Kammanā vattati loko, kammanā vattati pajā.'* See B. C. Law, *Concepts of Buddhism*, p. 59.

[25] *Visuddhi-magga*, II. pp. 602, 603.

[26] The stories contained in it are addressed to Buddhist lay devotees, *upāsakas* and *upāsikās*, exhorting them to perform meritorious deeds while on earth, in order to save themselves from personal miseries hereafter.

[27] B. C. Law, *The Debates Commentary*, p. 167 ; cf. *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, III. p. 415.

citta and *karma*. If mind be distracted, no *karma* can be performed. As to the relation between action and its consequence (*vipāka*), Buddhaghoṣa tells us that there is no action in consequence, and no consequence in action, each of them by itself is void. An action is void of its consequence. Consequence comes into being on account of action.[28] There is no originator of action, no sufferer of consequences; only phenomena continue.[29] *Karma* has its own individuality, its own inheritor. One will have to share the consequence of one's *karma*, whether good or bad.[30] The moral factor, which determines the destiny, is the maturity of one's own deed, of one's own action (*karma-vipāka*).[31]

In the interpretation of passages, such as 'He, by the doing, the accumulating, the augmenting, the abundance of that action, is gifted with the voice of a Brahmadeva',[32] some, e.g. the Mahāsaṅghikas, hold that sound is the result of action. Others hold that 'result of action' is a term that applies to mental states only, which have been transmitted by action, but does not apply to material things. In the same way, Buddhaghoṣa points out that some hold that the six sense spheres have arisen through the doing of past actions, and therefore they are results. Others hold, on the contrary, that the mind sphere may be such a result, but the rest are only transmitted by action and are not results.[33] *Karma*, under the name of *saṅkhāra*, is one of the links of the 'dependent origination' (*paṭicca-samuppāda*).[34]

The *Mahānidāna-Suttanta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya* (II. 63) tells us that there is descent of consciousness into the womb of the mother preparatory to rebirth. *Karma* only comes as a connecting link between desire (*tṛṣṇā*) and rebirth.[35] Keith points out[36] that a consistent body of evidence proves that even in the early school, there was a recognition of the necessity of finding some means of continuity, if the doctrine of Karma were not to fall into disrepute, and if remembrance of former births were to be possible. In support of this, he quotes the *Milindapañha* (pp. 40 ff.), a text of unblemished orthodoxy, in which the question of continuity and moral responsibility is energetically put.

III. JAINA DOCTRINE OF KARMA

In Jainism, *karma* may be worn off by austerity, service rendered to ascetics, or to the poor, the helpless, and the suffering, by giving them food,

[28] *Visuddhi-magga*, II. p. 603.
[29] '*Kammassa kārako n'atthi . . .*'—*ibid.*, II. p. 602
[30] *Ibid.*, II. p. 601.
[31] B. C. Law, *The Buddhist Conception of Spirits* (Second Edition), p. 2.
[32] *Dīgha Nikāya*, III. pp. 144, 173.
[33] B. C. Law, *The Debates Commentary*, p. 168.
[34] Childers, *op. cit.*, p. 178.
[35] Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy*, I. p. 56.
[36] *Buddhist Philosophy* (1923), pp. 78-81.

water, shelter, or clothing. *Karma* does not mean a deed or some invisible mystical force. It is nothing but a complexity of a very subtle matter which is supersensuous, and which pervades the whole world. The word '*karma*' is derived from the verb '*kṛ*', meaning to do. The Jains believe it to be the result of actions arising out of four sources—(1) *karma* is attachment to worldly things, such as food, raiment, dwelling place, women, etc.; (2) *karma* is produced by uniting one's body, mind, and speech to worldly things; (3) *karma* is engendered by giving the reins to anger, pride, deceit, or greed; and (4) false belief is a fruitful source of *karma*. In Hinduism, we find that God awards the fruits of *karma*, whereas in Jainism, *karma* accumulates energy and automatically works itself out without any outside intervention. The Hindus think of *karma* as formless, while the Jains think of it as having form.

The Jains divide *karma* according to its nature, duration, essence, and content. *Karma* is intimately bound up with the soul. According to the Jains, there are eight kinds of *karma*. The first kind hides knowledge from us (*jñānāvaraṇīya karma*). The second prevents us from beholding the true faith (*darśanāvaraṇīya karma*). The third causes us to experience either the sweetness of happiness or the bitterness of misery (*vedanīya karma*). The fourth, which is known as the *mohanīya karma*, bemuses all the human faculties. It results from worldly attachments and indulgence of the passions. The fifth determines the length of time which a Jīva must spend in the form with which its *karma* has endowed it (*āyuḥ karma*). The sixth, known as *nāma karma*, decides which of the four states or conditions—man, god, insect, and hell-being—shall be our particular *gati* (destiny). There are many divisions of *nāma karma*. The seventh is *gotra karma*. It is the *gotra* or the caste which determines a man's life, his occupation, the locality in which he may live, his marriage, his religious observances, and even his food. There are two main divisions of this *karma*. It decides whether a living being shall be born in a high-caste or low-caste family. The eighth and the last kind is the *antarāya karma*, the *karma* which always stands as an obstacle, e.g. *lābhāntarāya*, *bhogāntarāya*, *upabhogāntarāya*, and *vīryāntarāya*.[37]

The Jains hold that the soul, while on the first step (*mithyātvaguṇasthānaka*), is completely under the influence of *karma* and knows nothing of the truth. The soul, whirling round and round in the cycle of rebirth, loses some of its crudeness and attains to the state which enables it to distinguish between what is false and what is true. A soul remains in an uncertain condition, one moment knowing the truth and the next

[37] Mrs. S. Stevenson, *The Heart of Jainism* (Oxford University Press), pp. 177-83.

doubting it. A man, either through the influence of his past good deeds or by the teachings of his *guru*, obtains true faith. He then realizes the great importance of conduct, and can take the twelve vows. The Jains believe that as soon as a man reaches the stage of an *ayogikevalī-guṇa-sthānaka*, all his *karma* is purged away, and he proceeds at once to *mokṣa* as a *siddha*.

KRIYĀVĀDA AND AKRIYĀVĀDA OF JAINISM

The Jaina *Sūtrakṛtāṅga*[38] speaks of various types of Kriyāvāda (doctrine of action) then current in India. According to Mahāvīra, Kriyāvāda of Jainism is distinguished from Akriyāvāda (doctrine of non-action), Ajñānavāda (scepticism), and Vinayavāda (formalism). To arrive at a correct understanding of the doctrinal significance of Kriyāvāda of Jainism, it is necessary not only to see how it has been distinguished from Akriyāvāda, Ajñānavāda, and Vinayavāda, but also from other types of Kriyāvāda.

According to the *Sūtrakṛtāṅga*, the types of Akriyāvāda are as follows:

(1) On the dissolution of the five elements, i.e. earth, water, fire, air, and space, living beings cease to exist. On the dissolution of the body, the individual ceases to be. Everybody has an individual soul. The soul exists as long as the body exists.

(2) When a man acts or causes another to act, it is not his soul which acts or causes to act.[39]

(3) There are five elements, and the soul is a sixth substance. These six substances are imperishable.

(4) Pleasure, pain, and final beatitude are not caused by the souls themselves, but the individual souls experience them.

(5) The world has been created or is governed by the gods. It is produced from chaos.[40]

(6) The world is boundless and eternal.

All these views are reduced to four main types that correspond to those attributed in the Pali Nikāyas to four leading thinkers of the time, namely, atheism like that of Ajita, eternalism like that of Kātyāyana, absolutism like that of Kāśyapa, and fatalism like that of Gośāla. These may be described as follows:

(1) The Ātman is a living individual, a biological entity. The self does not outlast the destruction of the body. With the body ends life. No soul exists apart from the body.

[38] Ed. P. L. Vaidya. Poona, 1928. I.6.27 ; I.10.17.
[39] *Sūtrakṛtāṅga*, I.1.1.13 ; *Jaina Sūtras* (S.B.E.), II. pp. 236 ff.
[40] *Ibid.*, I.1.3.5-8.

(2) The five substances, with the soul as the sixth, are not created directly or indirectly. They are without beginning and end. They are independent of a directing cause. They are eternal.

(3) From nothing comes nothing. All things have the Ātman, self, or ego for their cause and object. They are produced by the self, they are manifested by the self, they are intimately connected with the self, and they are bound up in the self.

(4) One man admits action, and another man does not admit it. Both men are alike; their case is the same, because they are actuated by the same force, i.e. by fate. It is their destiny that all beings come to have a body to undergo the vicissitudes of life and to experience pleasure and pain.

Each of these types stands as an example of Akriyāvāda, inasmuch as it fails to inspire moral and pious action, or to make an individual responsible for an action and its consequences.[41]

According to the *Uttarādhyayana-Sūtra*, the inefficiency of knowledge is the real upshot of Ajñānavāda. In the *Sūtrakṛtāṅga*, the upholders of Ajñānavāda are represented as those thinkers who, pretending to be clever, reason incoherently and do not get beyond the confusion of their ideas.[42] Vinayavāda may be supposed to have been the same doctrine which has been criticized as *sīlabbataparāmāsa* in Buddhism. *Sīlabbataparāmāsa* is a view of those who hold that the purity of oneself may be reached through the observance of certain moral precepts or by means of keeping certain prescribed vows. The upholders of Vinayavāda assert that the goal of religious life is realized by conformation to the rules of discipline.[43]

The types of Kriyāvāda that do not come up to the standard of Jainism are the following:

(1) The soul of a man who is pure, will become free from bad *karma* on reaching beatitude, but in that state it will again become defiled through pleasant excitement or hatred.

(2) If a man, with the intention of killing a baby, hurts a gourd, mistaking it for a baby, he will be guilty of murder. If a man, with the intention of roasting a gourd, roasts a baby, mistaking him for a gourd, he will not be guilty of murder.

According to Mahāvīra, the painful condition of the self is brought about by one's own action, and not by any other cause. Pleasure and pain are brought about by one's own action. Individually a man is born, individually he dies, individually he falls, and individually he rises. His passions, consciousness, intellect, perceptions, and impressions belong to

[41] *Ibid.*, II.1.15-34. [42] *Ibid.*, I.12.2. [43] *Ibid.*, I.12.4.

the individual exclusively. All living beings owe their present form of existence to their own *karma*. The sinners cannot annihilate works by new works, the pious annihilate their works by abstention from works.[44]

The Jaiṇa doctrine of nine terms (*navatattva*) developed from the necessity for a systematic exposition of Kriyāvāda, which is, in its essential feature, only a theory of the soul and *karma*. *Karma* consists of acts, intentional and unintentional, that produce effects on the nature of the soul. It must be admitted that the soul is susceptible to the influences of *karma*. The categories of merit and demerit comprehend all acts, pious and sinful, which keep the soul bound to the circle of births and deaths. *Nirjarā*[45] consists in the wearing out of accumulated effects of *karma* on the soul by the practice of austerities.

There are four kinds of destructive *karma* (*ghātiya karma*) which retain the soul in mundane existence. They are as follows: (1) knowledge-obscuring *karma*; (2) faith-obscuring *karma*; (3) *karma* which obstructs the progress of the soul; and (4) *karma* which deludes the soul.[46]

In short, Mahāvīra's great message to mankind is that birth is nothing, caste is nothing, and *karma* is everything; and on the destruction of *karma* future happiness depends. *Karma* is the deed of the soul. It is a material forming a subtle bond of extremely refined kārmic matter which keeps the soul confined. Jainism, as a practical religion, teaches us to purge ourselves of impurities arising from *karma*. Thus *karma* plays an important part in Jaina metaphysics.

[44] *Ibid.*, I.12.15.

[45] *Uttarādhyayana-Sūtra*, XXVIII. 11; B. C. Law, *Mahāvīra: His Life and Teachings*, p. 92.

[46] B. C. Law, *Mahāvīra: His Life and Teachings*, p. 104.

NIRVĀṆA

THE CONCEPT

NIRVĀṆA is the *summum bonum* of Buddhism[1] and the ultimate of all that a Buddha taught or would teach. Buddhism is in essence a proclamation of the truth of *nirvāṇa*, a clear statement of the truth about *nirvāṇa*, a search for *nirvāṇa* (*nibbāna-pariyesanā*), and a sure path leading to *nirvāṇa* (*nibbānagāminī paṭipadā*).[2] *Nirvāṇa* is the free state of consciousness, the tranquil state of our internal nature, and the highest emotional state of spirituality and blessedness.[3] It consists essentially in subduing the haughty spirit, the perfect control of thirst, the paralysing of the very storage of creative energy, the arrest of the course of *saṁsāra* as regards the fate of an individual, the rare attainment of the state of the void, the waning of desire, the dispassionate state, and the cessation of all sense of discordance.[4] *Nirvāṇa* means the annihilation of passion, hatred, and delusion (*rāga, dosa,* and *moha*).[5] It is the waning out of all evils—the diminishing of the vicious and the weak in man, which is the negative aspect of his positive advance in becoming. In its negative aspect, it means the removal of greed, ill-will, and dullness, and also freedom from these ; it may be variously described as comfort, end of ill, end of becoming or life, end of craving, and the rest. In its positive aspect, it means mental illumination conceived as light, insight, state of feeling happiness, cool and calm and content (*sītibhāva, nibbuti, upasama*), peace, safety, and self-mastery. Objectively considered, it means truth, the highest good, a supreme opportunity, a regulated life, communion with the best.

As far as can be gathered from the *Dhammapada* and the *Khuddaka-pāṭha, nirvāṇa* is immortality, the opposite of which is death. The path of diligence is the path to immortality, and the way of indolence is the way to death.[6] It is secure from the worldly contact and unsurpassed in its reach. The *buddhas* declare *nirvāṇa* as the highest condition. It is the greatest happiness (*paramaṁ sukhaṁ*). With the vision of *nirvāṇa* the sinful nature vanishes for ever (*atthaṁ gacchanti āsavā*). Without knowledge, there is no meditation ; without meditation, there is no knowledge ; he

[1] '*Sabbadhammānaṁ uttamaṭṭhena varaṁ*'—*Khuddakapāṭha* with commentary (Pali Text Society, London, 1915), p. 193.

[2] *Khuddakapāṭha*: *Ratana-Sutta*, verse 12.

[3] B. M. Barua, *The Rôle of Buddhism in Indian Life and Thought*, p. 1.

[4] Cf. *Ariyapariyesana-Sutta, Majjhima Nikāya* (P.T.S.), I. pp. 160 ff.

[5] Mrs. Rhys Davids, *The Minor Anthologies of the Pali Canon* (S.B.B., 1935), I. p. xix.

[6] '*Appamādo amatapadaṁ, pamādo maccuno padaṁ*'—*Dhammapada*, 21.

who has knowledge and meditation is near unto *nirvāṇa*.[7] It is the bliss of emancipation (*nibbuti*) and the tranquil state (*santaṁ padaṁ*).

According to the *Suttanipāta*, it is a matchless island which possesses nothing, grasps at nothing, and which is the destroyer of decay and death.[8] The world is bound by pleasure, and by giving up desire (*taṇhā*), *nirvāṇa* can be attained.[9]

Nirvāṇa is the extinction of five *khandhas* (constituent elements).[10] It is the cessation of all sufferings. It can be attained through meditation, wisdom, observance of precepts, steadfastness, etc. The attributes of *nirvāṇa* consist of absence of passion, destruction of pride, avoidance of thirst, freedom from attachment, and destruction of all sensual pleasures. It is described as a void.[11] A person obtains *nirvāṇa* by making himself free from the wilderness of misdeeds.[12] It is freedom from all sins and final release from lower nature.[13] It means that from which the arrow of desire has been removed.[14] It is so called because it is a departure from that craving which is called *vāṇa*. It is to be realized through knowledge belonging to the four paths (spiritual stages). It is the object of those paths and their fruition. It is excellent, transcendental (*lokuttara*), uncreated, and free from lust.

Nirodha,[15] *nirmokṣa*,[16] *nirvṛti*,[17] and *nirveda*[18] are the different synonyms of *nirvāṇa*. *Nirvāṇa* is the blissful, peaceful element—the refuge which is free from the passion of craving. It makes all *bhavas* leading to pain subside. It is the salvation which is eternal, unassailable, and noble. It means the cessation of the whole of suffering. It is that supreme state in which there is neither birth nor decay, nor disease, nor death, nor contact with what is disagreeable, neither disappointment nor separation from what is agreeable.[19] It is that state which is tranquil, final, and imperishable.[20] Just as a lamp is extinguished for ever from the exhaustion of oil, and does not depart to the earth or the sky or any of the quarters, so the saint who has reached *nirvāṇa* does not come back to the earth.[21] In his case, salvation means the exhaustion of corrupting factors; it is tranquillity only. By

[7] *'Yaṁhi jhānañ ca paññā ca sa ve nibbānasantike.'*

[8] *'Akiñcanaṁ anādānaṁ etaṁ dīpaṁ anāparaṁ, nibbānaṁ iti naṁ brumi jarāmaccu parikkhayaṁ.'*

[9] *Suttanipāta* (P.T.S., 1913), p. 215.

[10] *'Pañcannaṁ khandhānaṁ nirodho'—Visuddhi-magga* (P.T.S., 1920-21), II. p. 611.

[11] *Kathāvatthuppakaraṇa-aṭṭhakathā* (*J.P.T.S.*, 1889), p. 178.

[12] *Sumaṅgala-vilāsinī* (P.T.S.), I. p. 217.

[13] *Atthasālinī* (P.T.S.), p. 409.

[14] *'Taṇhāsaṅkhātaṁ vānaṁ niggataṁ vā tasmā vānā ti nibbānaṁ'—Atthasālinī*, p. 409; cf. *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha*, p. 31.

[15] Aśvaghoṣa's *Saundarananda-kāvya* (Ed. Johnston, 1928), XVI.26. *Nirodha* is that state of the self in which consciousness transcends the sphere of the senses and their objects. B. C. Law, *Concepts of Buddhism*, p. 29.

[16] *Saundarananda-kāvya*, V.15; VIII.62; XVIII.16.

[17] *Ibid.*, XVI.29.

[18] *Ibid.*, XVI.44.

[19] *Ibid.*, XVI.27.

[20] *Ibid.*

[21] *Ibid.*, XVI.28-29.

extinguishing the blazing fire of passions with the water of steadfastness, the saint comes to the highest happiness like a man descending into a cool pool in the hot weather. There is no more for him anything which is agreeable or disagreeable, any liking or disliking; he feels joy because of their absence. Like one who has obtained safety after a great danger, or deliverance from great oppression, or light in darkness, or the safe shore, or like one who has gained in health after an unbearable illness, or release from a great debt, or escape from the jaws of a chasing enemy, or plenty after scarcity, the saint comes to a supreme state of peace. The sure way to *nirvāṇa* or salvation lies in the noble eightfold path, as propounded by the Buddha.

NIRVĀṆA IS UNCAUSED, BUT REALIZABLE

It is apparent from what Nāgasena has said in the *Milindapañha* (III.4.6) that a noble disciple (*ariyasāvaka*) does not take pleasure in the senses and their objects. Inasmuch as he does not find delight in them, craving ceases in him, and by the cessation of craving (*taṇhā*), grasping (*upādāna*) ceases, and by the cessation of grasping, becoming (*bhava*) ceases, and when becoming has ceased, birth ceases, and with its cessation, old age, death, grief, lamentation, pain, sorrow, and despair cease to exist. In this sense cessation is *nirvāṇa.*

Nirvāṇa being uncaused, there is no cause that would bring about *nirvāṇa* itself. *Nirvāṇa* is uncompounded, not made of anything, yet it exists. It is perceptible to the mind. *Nirvāṇa* is all bliss, though the process of seeking after it is painful. It is bliss unalloyed. It is neither past nor future nor present, nor produced, nor not produced, nor producible. It is to be known by freedom from distress and danger, by confidence, peace, bliss, happiness, delicacy, purity, and freshness. There is a means that would bring about the realization of *nirvāṇa.* He who orders his life aright realizes *nirvāṇa.* He who gains the highest fruit of sainthood may be said to have seen *nirvāṇa* face to face.

Visuddhi or purity is the main ethical term to express the nature of Buddhist *nirvāṇa.* According to the Jaina *Sūtrakṛtāṅga* (I.1.2.27), one reaches *nirvāṇa* by purity of heart. From the ethical point of view, to realize *nirvāṇa* is to attain the highest purity of one's own self—of one's own nature. It is clear therefore that the method of realization of *nirvāṇa* involves the process of perfect self-examination, self-purification, self-restraint, and self-culture. If the experience of *nirvāṇa* consists in the feeling of peacefulness, tranquillity, or harmony in the whole of one's being, and in the whole of nature by which one is surrounded, it is not possible to achieve it without the practice of self-alienation from all that is not one's own. The process of self-alienation is a method of viewing things as they

are (*yathābhūtaṁ, bhūtaṁ bhūtato, ṭhitaṁ ṭhitato*). Some hold that the twofold ethical end of Buddhism is negative: (1) to remove the obstacles (*nivaraṇas*), and (2) to put away the fetters (*saṁyojanas*) or to destroy the *anusayas* (the sinfulness that lies deep in our nature). Others hold that the end is positive, namely, to attain a perfect, healthy condition of self. The *Rathavinīta-Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya* contains a rough sketch of self-culture through purity.[22] *Sīla-visuddhi* (purity of morals), *citta-visuddhi* (purity of mind), and *paññā-visuddhi* (purity of knowledge) are really the three main items for consideration, as mentioned therein.[23]

With a mystic, as distinguished from a devotee (*saddhāvimutta*) or intellectualist (*paññāvimutta*), *nirvāṇa* is a vision, an experience, a feeling, and self-state—the highest, the best, and the most real of all that he knows of, thinks of, or speaks of. The vision of *nirvāṇa* dawns upon consciousness; the realization of *nirvāṇa* is possible in that stage of *samādhi* (trance, self-concentration) which is aptly called *saññāvedayitanirodha*. According to the Buddha's claim, this is the ninth stage of *samādhi*, reached for the first time by him. This is a state of trance when outwardly a man who reaches it is as good as dead,[24] there being nothing but warmth (*usmā*) as a sign of life. In this state, a level of consciousness (*citta*) is reached where consciousness is ultimately thrown back on itself, completely void, being devoid of the subject-object relation (*grāhya-grāhaka-bhāva-rahita*).[25] In the same state, a plane of inner experience is reached where there is no longer any longing for this or that object of sense. This is the highest psychical state where consciousness appears to be face to face with Reality.[26]

We now turn to the Mahāyānic interpretation of *nirvāṇa*. According to Nāgārjuna, *saṁsāra* and *nirvāṇa* are the two relative ideas, and, as such, there is no absolute distinction between the two.[27] Both stand on the same footing in respect of each other as regards their significance. There cannot be any conception of a relation between the two even in apposition. The *pratītya-samutpāda*, viewed and interpreted as a law of sequence of causal antecedents and consequents, explains the essential nature of *saṁsāra*. The same, viewed and interpreted as 'mere origination' (*uppādamatta*),[28] without any idea of temporal relation associated with it, expresses the essential nature

[22] *Majjhima Nikāya*, I. pp. 147, 148.

[23] The Buddhist system of purity was developed by Buddhadatta in his *Abhidhammāvatāra* and more fully by Upatissa in his *Vimutti-magga*. Buddhaghoṣa's *Visuddhi-magga* contains the final development of the system.

[24] *Dīgha Nikāya* (P.T.S., 1903), II. p. 156.

[25] *Madhyānta-vibhāga-sūtra-bhāṣya-ṭīkā* of Sthiramati, I. p. 10.

[26] B. M. Barua, *Universal Aspect of Buddhism* (Bombay Lecture, 1935).

[27] '*Na saṁsārasya nirvāṇāt kiñcidasti viśeṣaṇam*', *Madhyamaka-kārikā* (Bibliotheca Buddhica, IV), p. 535.

[28] According to Buddhaghoṣa, it cannot be a valid interpretation of *paṭicca-samuppāda*—*Visuddhi-magga*, II. p. 519.

of *nirvāṇa*. In other words, the *pratītya-samutpāda* in its *samutpāda* aspect is *saṁsāra*, and the same in its *nirodha* aspect is *nirvāṇa*. The Buddha tried to show that *nirvāṇa* cannot but be the final term or the last category of thought. Perception or intuition (*diṭṭha*), tradition (*suta*), and inference (*muta*) cannot exhaust the meaning of *viññāta* (knowledge), which is something more than what is comprehended by them jointly or severally. If *ekatta* (unity) be the next category to express the essential character of knowledge (*viññāta*), another category, *nānatta* (plurality), is needed to cover the residual of meaning uncovered by *ekatta*. To realize the meaning of both *ekatta* and *nānatta* another category is needed, namely, *sabba* (universality), which is something more in meaning than what is comprehended by *ekatta* and *nānatta*. *Sabba* or universality is not enough to convey the meaning of the whole of reality, which is constituted not only of cognition, but also of volition and feeling. To comprehend all, another category is required, and it is *nirvāṇa* (the ideal, ideality). *Nirvāṇa* is not an experience that one may identify oneself with it or think that either one is *nirvāṇa*, or one is in *nirvāṇa*, or one is from *nirvāṇa*, or *nirvāṇa* is

BUDDHIST ORIGIN OF THE CONCEPT

The popularity of *nirvāṇa* as a distinct term of Indian religious thought is due to the greatest importance attached to it in early Buddhism by the Buddha himself and his disciples. The term occurs nowhere in any of the Vedic or Brāhmaṇic texts that may be definitely assigned to pre-Buddhistic dates. It is found in Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī* accounting grammatically or etymologically for the formation of the word '*nirvāṇa*' ('*Nirvāṇo'vāte*', VIII.2.50). In popular usage, the word '*nirvāṇa*' was employed either in connection with a burning fire or in connection with a burning lamp, and in both cases it meant extinction.[30] According to the Jaina *Kalpa-Sūtra*, *nirvāṇa* denotes the final liberation (*mokṣa*) of human soul from all kinds of bondage. In other words, *nirvāṇa* is the same term as *parinirvāṇa*. The nine main terms (*navatattva*) of Jainism include *nijjarā* and *mokṣa*.[31]

It will be historically incorrect to say that *nirvāṇa* was an innovation or invention on the part of the Buddha. We know from the *Sabbadhamma-mūlapariyāya-Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya* that *nirvāṇa* came to be recognized as the ultimate category of Indian religious thought. In this Sutta, there is an indication of the Buddha's attitude towards *nirvāṇa* as

[29] *Majjhima Nikāya*, I. p. 6.

[30] *Dīgha Nikāya*, II. p. 157; *Khuddakapāṭha*: *Ratana-Sutta*, verse 14; *Suttanipāta*: *Dhaniya-Sutta*, verse 2; *Majjhima Nikāya*, I. p. 487.

[31] Cf. *Devadaha-Sutta*, *Majjhima Nikāya*, II. p. 214. Here *nijjiṇṇa* occurs in place of *nijjarā*.

distinguished from the prevalent attitude.[32] Two different modes of thinking may here be suggested: (1) the Brāhmaṇical mode by which the idea of *Brahmanirvāṇa* was developed, and (2) the Buddha's mode by which the Buddhist idea of *nirvāṇa* was elaborated and systematized. The problem of *nirvāṇa* is approached from the point of view of Ātman according to the Brāhmaṇical and Jaina thinkers, and from the view-point of *anātman* according to the Buddha and Buddhist thinkers (cf. *Laṅkāvatāra-Sūtra*).

THE QUEST OF NIRVĀṆA

Regarding the eschatological aspect of *nirvāṇa*, the fact that true salvation of man consists in evolving into an eternal personality, exhausting all possibilities of rebirth, was realized by the people of India at the time of the rise of Buddhism. The whole chain of reasoning is: To be subject to birth is to be subject to decay and death. The world of life is so ordained that there is no escape from decay and death for one who has been brought into existence by the natural process of creation—by the parental union in the case of all higher forms of earthly beings.[33]

The very possibility of such an escape is denied by the daily experience of things or events happening at all times.[34] Even a *buddha* or *tathāgata* cannot escape it in spite of his greatness and perfection.[35] And *saṁsāra* for an individual is nothing but the painful necessity of undergoing the repeated process of birth and death—running in the course of transmigration of soul—,[36] or finding somehow the concatenation of individual existence through the repeated natural process of birth and death.[37]

It is the consciousness of the 'contingent character' of *saṁsāra*, the world of life and existence, and the bitter experience of its 'unpleasantness' or 'unsatisfactory sequel' that is at the back of the religious quest of a permanent ground of existence and experience—a permanent feature or element of Reality, some sort of an Absolute. The Buddha himself said, 'I have reached this element of things which is deep, difficult to see, difficult to understand, tranquil, excellent, not within the access of mere logic, subtle, and to be experienced only by the wise, each for himself. The multitude find delight in what they cling to, they are attached to it, and rejoice over it.' It is difficult indeed for them to apprehend this position (of *saṁsāra*), namely, the causal determination of all occurrences in fact—to apprehend also this position (of *nirvāṇa*), namely, that it is the subsidence of all predisposition

[32] *Majjhima Nikāya*, I. pp. 4, 6.
Ibid., I. p. 266.
[34] *Mahāparinibbāna-Suttanta, Dīgha Nikāya*, II. p. 158.
[35] *Dīgha Nikāya*, II. p. 157; *Majjhima Nikāya*, I. p. 82.
[36] The idea is Brāhmaṇical as well as Jaina.
[37] The Buddhistic way of expressing it.

towards the form of creation, the relinquishment of all ideas of belongings, the extinction of desire, the dispassion, the cessation, the ultimate.[38]

NIRVĀṆA IS A VALID CONCEPT, THOUGH INDESCRIBABLE

The authoritative utterance of all the early Buddhist monks and nuns is to this effect: 'I have lived the holy life, done all that I was to do, and am now free from all attachment. Completely destroyed is the cause of birth through cycles of existence; there is no longer the possibility of any rebirth.'

But is this a genuine feeling felt in the innermost depth of one's being or self-consciousness, or an actuality? The question was raised by many an interested inquirer in the Buddha's time, and it still remains. What happens to a *tathāgata* (perfect man) after death? Does he continue to exist or does he cease to exist? Does he both exist and not exist, or does he neither exist nor not exist?[39] The Buddha remained silent when such an inquiry was pressed. He was always reluctant to commit himself to any statement in reply to any of these queries.

In the *Cūḷa-Māluṅkya-Sutta,*[40] Māluṅkyaputta is advised by the Buddha to treat his *avyākata* (point in regard to which he did not commit himself to any one-sided statement whatsoever) as *avyākata,* and his *vyākata* as *vyākata.* The inquiry referred to above is to be counted among the Buddha's *avyākatas.* Seeing that another inquirer, Aggī Vacchagotta, got rather puzzled when he was told in all stages of inquiry, 'Vaccha, the inquiry in this form does not suit me, is not fitting', the Buddha felt it necessary to explain his own position thus: 'Just as it is not possible to know whither the fire is gone, which was so long burning before a man, after it is extinguished once for all on the exhaustion of all materials of burning—the fuel—, in the same way, it is not possible to represent a *tathāgata* after he has passed away on the complete exhaustion of all materials of bodily existence and of all prerequisites of representation of an individual as commonly known.'[41]

PARINIRVĀṆA

To say that the Buddha attained *parinirvāṇa* is the same as to say in ordinary language that he died (*kālaṁ akari muni*).[42] In his own words, to attain *parinirvāṇa* is to see 'the fire of life extinguished in that elemental condition of extinction which allows no residuum of possibility for re-ignition' (*anupādisesāyanibbānadhātuyā parinibbuto*).[43] The manner in

[38] *Majjhima Nikāya,* I. p. 167.
[39] *Ibid.,* I. pp. 426 ff.
[40] *Ibid.,* I. p. 431.
[41] *Ibid.,* I. pp. 487, 488.
[42] *Dīgha Nikāya,* II. p. 157.
[43] *Ibid.,* II. p. 157; *Theragāthā* (P.T.S., 1883), p. 83; *Vinaya Piṭaka* (Ed. Oldenberg, 1930), II. p. 239.

which the Buddha attained *parinirvāṇa* is said to have been described by Thera Anuruddha in the *Dīgha Nikāya* of the *Sutta Piṭaka*.[44]

In the *Ratana-Sutta*, the disciples of the Buddha who experience or realize the bliss of *nirvāṇa* are praised as personages who 'expire like a burning lamp (on the exhaustion of oil and wick)'.[45] Whilst they live, they live enjoying the bliss of peace obtained without having to pay any price for it.[46]

Such is, in short, the Buddhist description of *parinirvāṇa*, which is the natural end of life of those gifted men who realize *nirvāṇa* in their present conscious existence.

In Jainism also, *parinirvāṇa* is the last fruit or final consummation of the highest perfection attained by a man or attainable in human life.[47] But *parinirvāṇa* is the same term as *nirvāṇa*[48] or *mokṣa*, meaning final liberation that comes to pass on the complete waning out or exhaustion of the accumulated strength or force of *karma*. With the Jains, *nirvāṇa* or *mokṣa* is not a dreadful or terrible term like the Buddhist *parinirvāṇa*, which suggests at once an idea of complete annihilation of individuality of a saint after death by the simile of the total extinction of a burning lamp on the exhaustion of the oil and the wick. The point is discussed in the Jaina *Mokṣasiddhi*: Would you really think (with the Buddhist) that *nirvāṇa* is a process of extinction of human soul which is comparable to the process of extinction of a burning lamp (on the exhaustion of the oil and the wick)? The hearer is advised not to think like that. For with the Jains, *nirvāṇa* is nothing but a highly special or transcendental condition of human soul, in which it remains eternally and absolutely free from passion, hatred, birth, decay, disease, and the like, because of the complete waning out of all causes of suffering.

The *Milindapañha* definitely says that after the attainment of *parinirvāṇa* the Buddha is no longer in that condition in which he is able to receive any offering made in his honour, though the offering itself as an act of worship is not fruitless on that account, so far as the worshipper is concerned. Thus the Buddhist description of the Buddha's *parinirvāṇa* leaves no room for the popular belief in the possibility of resurrection of the bodily form, or even the spiritual form, of a saint.[49] Is it nevertheless a complete cessation of personality, even if that personality is made up of pure consciousness? According to the *Laṅkāvatāra-Sūtra*, there is then

[44] *Dīgha Nikāya*, II. p. 157.
[45] *Khuddakapāṭha*, p. 5. Cf. *Suttanipāta*, p. 42; *Therīgāthā* (P.T.S., 1883), p. 135.
[46] *Khuddakapāṭha*, p. 4.
[47] *Kalpa-Sūtra* (Jacobi's Edition, 1879), p. 120.
[48] *Ibid.*, p. 189.
[49] Note the description of the emergence of an effulgent miniature form of the sage Śarabhaṅga out of burning fire to which he offered himself as an oblation (*Rām.*, *Araṇyakāṇḍa*).

lakṣaṇa-nirodha (cessation of all signs of manifestation), but no *prabandha-nirodha* (cessation of the process of *vijñāna* in its own pure or transcendental mode).[50]

In all stages of the evolution of religious thought in India, the description of the ultimate goal of the higher path of religious effort carried with it the dread of extinction of the individual after death. In the opinion of such ancient lawgivers as Baudhāyana and Āpastamba, the *devayāna*, leading the traveller by an onward journey to the pure realm of infinity beyond the solar region, leads really but to the funeral ground, *śmaśāna*, and those who travel by that path 'alone', in disregard of the *pitṛyāna*, become ultimately 'dust and perish' (*rajo bhūtvā dhvaṁsate*).[51]

The Buddha's persistent reluctance to answer any of the four questions put to him regarding the fate of the *tathāgata* after death caused puzzlement to his interlocutor, Aggī Vacchagotta.[52] The Buddha offered an explanation, the purport of which was to indicate that the condition of the *tathāgata* after *parinirvāṇa* was incapable of description in all convenient terms: *rūpa, vedanā, saññā* (*saṁjñā*), *saṅkhāra* (*saṁskāra*), and *viññāṇa* (*vijñāna*).

An illuminating description of the state or condition of existence reached by a person on the attainment of *parinirvāṇa* has been put into the mouth of the Buddha himself. It is as follows: 'Where water, earth, heat, and air do not find footing, there no light burns and the sun does not shine, the moon does not shed her radiant beams, and darkness does not exist. When a sage who is a Brāhmaṇa has realized the truth by silent concentration, then he becomes free from form and formlessness, happiness and suffering.'[53]

ASPECTS OF NIRVĀṆA

Early Buddhist texts describe the different aspects of *nirvāṇa* brought out by various words or terms, which may be uncritically called synonyms. The commentary on the *Nettipakaraṇa* thus explains these terms: *Nirvāṇa* is called uncompounded or absolute (*asaṅkhata*), because it is not accounted for by any known causal factor ; endless or infinite (*ananta*), because it knows no extermination ; stainless (*anāsava*), because the influxes of sin have no hold on it ; true or real (*sacca*) ; the other shore (*pāra*), because it makes for the further shore of the ocean of existence through *saṁsāra* ; subtle (*nipuṇa*) ; very difficult to see (*sududdasa*), because it cannot be apprehended save and except by the instrument of a gradually matured

[50] *Laṅkāvatāra-Sūtra* (Nanjio's Edition).
[51] B. M. Barua, *A History of Pre-Buddhistic Indian Philosophy* (Calcutta University, 1921), pp. 247-49.
[52] *Majjhima Nikāya*, I. p. 487.
[53] *Udāna* (Pali Text Society), p. 9.

knowledge; unimpaired (*ajajjara*), because it is not affected by any process of decay; immutable (*dhuva*); not vanishing (*apalokita*), because it does not disappear on account of decay and death; it cannot be pointed out (*anidassana*); not subject to description (*nippapañca*); tranquil (*santa*); undying (*amata*), because it is of an immortal nature; excellent (*paṇīta*); safe (*siva*), because there is no effect on it of baneful consequences of sinful deeds; secure (*khema*); destruction of desire (*taṇhakkhaya*); wonderful (*acchariya*); marvellous (*abbhuta*); unimpeded (*anītika*); not risky (*anītika-dhamma*), because it is not of a nature to run any risk; unborn (*ajāta*); undisturbed (*anupaddava*); uncreated (*akata*); free from sorrow (*asoka*); uncomplicated (*anupasagga*); deep (*gambhīra*); difficult of perception (*duppassa*); transcendental (*uttara*); unsurpassed (*anuttara*); unequalled (*asama*); matchless (*appaṭisama*); *summum bonum* (*seṭṭha*); supreme (*jeṭṭha*); habitat (*leṇa*); protection (*tāna*); hitchless (*araṇa*); spotless (*anaṅgaṇa*); innocent (*akāma*); unimpure (*vimala*); the island (*dīpa*); immeasurable (*appamāṇa*); support (*patiṭṭhā*), because it is the stand to prevent sinking into dangerous waters of *saṁsāra* etc. *Nirvāṇa* is also called *saraṇa* (ultimate refuge); *virāga* (detachment); *accutapada* (immutable state); *mutti* (liberation); *visuddhi* (purity); *vimutti* (emancipation); *suddhi* (holiness); and *nibbuti* (blessedness).

LAYMAN'S COMPETENCE FOR NIRVĀṆA

Lastly comes the question whether a layman can attain *nirvāṇa*. Dr. Poussin in his *Way to Nirvāṇa* (pp. 150, 151) writes thus: 'Laymen, however faithful, generous, and virtuous they may be, even if they practise the fortnightly abstinence and continence of the *upavāsa*, cannot reach *nirvāṇa*.' In other words, according to him, only the monks, after having reached the fourth stage of sanctification, can obtain *nirvāṇa*. We find it otherwise, if we closely examine the following references from Pali texts. A close study of the *Guhaṭṭhaka-Sutta* (p. 58) and the *Jarā-Sutta* (p. 129) of the *Mahāniddesa*, together with their commentaries by Dhammapāla, helps us to look for the *munis* both among the householders and the recluses. The *munis* are defined as persons who have attenuated their sins and have seen *nibbāna*; and as to householders, they are represented as persons who are overburdened with all household duties. No other discrimination is sought to be made between the *āgāramunis* and the *anāgāramunis* than this, that while the former keep to the method of household life, the latter do not. As for the attainment, both are held out as equally competent to win the highest state, which is *nibbāna*.[54]

[54] Commentary on the *Mahāniddesa* (Siamese Edition), p. 218; *Guhaṭṭhaka-Sutta* and *Jarā-Sutta*.

In the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*,[55] we find mention of twenty-one lay *arahats*. T. W. Rhys Davids, in his learned introduction to the *Sāmaññaphala-Sutta*, calls them laymen *arahats*.[56] If we are to believe the statement of Dr. Poussin, how was it possible that laymen became *arahats* fully qualified for obtaining *nirvāṇa*? In the *Kathāvatthu*, we find that Kulaputta Yasa, householder Uttiya, and young Brāhmaṇa Setu attained Arahatship in all the circumstances of life in the laity.[57] Referring to this point, S. Z. Aung and Mrs. Rhys Davids have inferred that a layman under exceptional circumstances may attain Arahatship, but to keep it he must give up the world.[58] We find that T. W. Rhys Davids and C. A. F. Rhys Davids have raised the question as to who in the older period could be an *arahant*.[59] The answer is—anyone, men or women, old or young, lay or *religieux*. They have drawn our attention to a number of lay *arahats* mentioned in many canonical and non-canonical Pali books. It is distinctly mentioned in the *Milindapañha*,[60] which is one of the most important Pali books, that Nāgasena in reply to the question put to him by King Menander points out that whether he be a layman or recluse, he who attains to the supreme insight, to the supreme conduct of life, will win his way to the excellent condition of Arahatship.[61] It is clear from this passage that a householder, if he leads a religious life, may obtain Arahatship, which is *nirvāṇa*.

The *Milindapañha* further points out that whosoever has attained, as a layman, to Arahatship, has one of the two courses left to him and no other —either that very day he enters the Order, or he dies, for beyond that day he cannot last.[62] 'And all of them, O King, who as laymen, living at home and in the enjoyment of the pleasures of senses, realize in themselves the condition of peace, the supreme good, *nirvāṇa*—all of them had in former births accomplished their training, laid the foundation in the practice of the thirteen vows, and purified their walk and conduct by means of them ; and so now even as laymen, living at home and in the enjoyment of the pleasures of senses, do they realize in themselves the condition of peace, the supreme good, *nirvāṇa*.'[63]

[55] (P.T.S. Edition), III. p. 451. Cf. *Vinaya Piṭaka* (Ed. Oldenberg, 1929), I. p. 17 ; *The Questions of King Milinda* (Sacred Books of the East), II. pp. 57, 96, 245 f.n. ; *Dhammapada* (commentary), I. p. 340.

[56] *Dialogues of the Buddha* (Sacred Books of the Buddhists, II), I. p. 63 f.n.

[57] *'Yaso kulaputto, Uttiyo gahapati, Setu māṇavo gihissa byañjanena arahattaṁ pattā, tena vata re vattabbe "Gihī'ssa arahā ti" '*—*Kathāvatthu* (Pali Text Society), p. 268.

[58] *Points of Controversy* (P.T.S., 1915), p. 158 f.n.

[59] *Dialogues of the Buddha* (S.B.B., IV), III. p. 5.

[60] According to the Burmese tradition, the *Milindapañho* is one of the books of the *Khuddaka Nikāya*, which is included in the *Sutta Piṭaka*, hence a book of the canon (Bode, *The Pali Literature of Burma*, p. 4).

[61] *The Questions of King Milinda*, II. p. 58.

[62] *Ibid.*, II. p. 96.

[63] *Ibid.*, II. p. 253.

T. W. Rhys Davids and C. A. F. Rhys Davids remark, in their introduction to the *Pāṭika-Suttanta*, that when a layman had experienced the mental change called becoming an *arahant*, the natural result, under the conditions prevailing in North India in the sixth or fifth century B.C., would be that he would become a *religieux*, and this may have been sufficient reason for such opinions as those expressed in the *Kathāvatthu* and the *Milindapañha* having, in the course of centuries, grown up.[44] In the *Dhammapada*, we find that the third verse of the 'Appamāda-vagga' refers to those who are learned, meditative, steadfast, and always firm in their determination as obtaining *nirvāṇa*; the sixth verse of the 'Kodha-vagga' says that those who are always watchful, who study day and night, and who strive after *nirvāṇa*, will be free from passion; and the last verse of the 'Magga-vagga' refers to a wise and well-behaved man who should quickly clear the way leading to *nirvāṇa*. All such verses of the *Dhammapada* point out that a layman or monk may obtain *nirvāṇa*.

[44] *Dialogues of the Buddha*, III. pp. 5, 6.

BUDDHISM IN RELATION TO VEDĀNTA

RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHIC THOUGHT BEFORE THE BUDDHA

THERE were various religious and philosophic speculations in the country before the Buddha was born, which undoubtedly exercised a great influence upon his mind. We notice, in the first place, a class of people performing various Vedic rites and sacrifices in the belief that they helped one to gain not only the pleasures and enjoyments of this world and the next, but also liberation. Alongside of these advocates of Vedic sacrifices were others who had lost their faith in them and held that they could hardly bring about the highest bliss in life. Some of these thinkers attempted to interpret Vedic sacrifices allegorically, saying, for instance, with reference to the 'horse-sacrifice' (*aśvamedha*), that the sacrificial horse was not an ordinary horse, but one having the dawn for the head, the sun for the eyes, the wind for the breath, the heaven for the back, the intermediate space between heaven and earth for the belly, the earth for the legs, and so on.[1] They also interpreted the self of the sacrifice as the worshipper himself, his faith as his wife, his body as the firewood, his breast as the shrine, and so forth, concluding that one who knew this sacrifice attained success. For these thinkers, whose influence became stronger and stronger as time went on, the external Vedic sacrifices had no value whatsoever. They regarded them merely as frail rafts on which one could in no way cross the ocean of *saṁsāra* (relative existence).[2] Thus they developed the new idea of internal sacrifice, which came to be rightly known as *jñāna-yajña* (sacrifice of knowledge) in contrast with the older *dravya-yajña* (sacrifice with material things).[3] Among the followers of this system of internal sacrifice are Vedāntins as well as the Buddha. Though this view may sound strange, it is amply substantiated in the following paragraphs.

As time went on, the authority of the scriptures, the source of Vedic sacrifices, began to lose its hold on the people. As a consequence, there arose many free and independent thinkers who propounded new systems of religious and philosophic speculation.

Vedic rites often included animal sacrifices of a very cruel, horrible, and revolting nature. The sacrificers themselves seem to have felt it, as is evident from the following short, yet very interesting, story in a Vedic text: First the sacrificial essence was in man. So when the man was

[1] *Bṛ. U.*, I.1.1. [2] *Mu. U.*, I.2.7. [3] *Cf. B.G.*, IV.33.

sacrificed, it entered into the horse. When the horse was sacrificed, it entered into the cow. When the cow was sacrificed, it entered into the sheep. When the sheep was sacrificed, it entered into the goat. When the goat was also sacrificed, it entered into the earth, and was found there in the form of rice and barley of which is made the sacrificial cake (*puroḍāś*). Thus even the advocates of Vedic sacrifices used to say that the offering of animal sacrifice and that of the sacrificial cake were of the same efficacy. Gradually, in later ages, we find the offering of ghee and cake as substitute for animals (*ghṛtapaśu* and *piṣṭapaśu*). And it is to be noted that at the present day a stem of sugarcane or a pumpkin gourd (*ikṣudaṇḍa* or *kuṣmāṇḍa*) is sacrificed as an animal by those worshippers who do not like animal sacrifice.

Be that as it may, a strong voice was raised by a certain section of the people against the Vedic sacrifices attended with animal-killing, which were openly declared to be impure (*aviśuddha*). It was also held that it was impossible to reach the final goal through them.

Now, as regards the earlier conception of the Vedic religion, some would say it was naturalism followed by anthropomorphism, while others would tell us that everything was believed to have been permeated by a soul. As to the Vedic belief in God, scholars differ—some holding it to be polytheism, others to be monotheism, or henotheism. There are some who view it as monism too. We are not going to enter into the details of this question here, but shall content ourselves with mentioning a bare fact on the point. It cannot be gainsaid that theism, in whatever form it might be, secured a strong hold on the minds of some people at the time we are speaking of. Yet, by a large section of thinkers it was utterly ignored. This seems to have been due to two factors: firstly, the belief in the extraordinary power of Vedic rites grew so strong among the followers of the Karma-mārga (path of ritual) that no necessity whatsoever was felt for the intervention of a God in bestowing the highest reward for actions (*karma*), i.e. heaven (*svarga*) or that bliss which never disappears ; secondly, the Vedāntic monism declaring the existence of only one Self naturally removed the belief in God also. For, if there remains only One, it is the man himself or his Self, as it is impossible to think of one's own annihilation. Besides, the conception of God is possible only when there is the notion of both the worshipper and the worshipped, and not otherwise.

It is said that the solution of the problem of the creation and destruction of the world requires the conception of God. But there were some in that age according to whom there was neither creation nor destruction of the universe. It has ever been in the form in which it is now visible, the changes in it being due to different circumstances. Even accepting the theory of

evolution and dissolution of the world, there were also some others who explained them in a different way, allowing thereby no room for the intervention of God. They advocated dualism, believing in two eternal principles, the Self and the primeval Cause (Puruṣa and Prakṛti), from which both the evolution and dissolution of the world are quite deducible. No help is required of God for one's salvation too, for man himself can realize it by following the path suggested.

With regard to metaphysical or philosophical thoughts, there were various other sections of thinkers holding different views, such as the efficacy of offering sacrifices and oblations; absence of results of one's good or bad actions; the existence, non-existence, and partial existence of this world and the next; the importance of discipline as the only means of attaining salvation; the origination of the world from Time or Nature; and many others too numerous to mention. When the Jñāna-mārga (path of knowledge) of the Upaniṣads prevailed over the Karma-mārga, external means for achieving the highest object of life naturally gave place to internal ones, and thus meditation took the place of performance of rites and ceremonies. This gave rise to *yoga*, which developed to a great extent and was being much practised in the country long before the advent of the Buddha.

Now, man is naturally attached to worldly enjoyments, and wants to satisfy thereby the sense-organs. Gradually, however, when it was fully realized that their satisfaction could in no way bring about real happiness, those who were desirous of peace turned back and tried their best to control their senses, resorting to austerity or self-mortification in its different forms. In some cases, these were carried to the severest possible extent. There was also a section of people who held that neither excessive indulgence in sensuous enjoyments nor extreme self-mortification was the right path. They practised a mild form of asceticism, as indicated by such words as *brahmacarya* (continence), *tapas* (austerity), *śama* (control of the mind), *dama* (control of the senses), etc., without which it is impossible to march along the path of salvation. With reference to ethical laws no special mention is needed. Long before the Buddha, the religious life of the country had attained a very high moral standard, the keynote of which was *brahmacarya*, the root of all spiritual advancement.

Besides, we should bear in mind that the Upaniṣadic thoughts, especially the doctrine or theory of Ātman or Brahman, were then exercising a tremendous influence upon the people of religious disposition.

It was in this atmosphere of free religious and philosophical speculations that the Buddha was born.

INTERNAL SACRIFICE, BRAHMAPRĀPTI, AND BRAHMACARYA

Brought up in an atmosphere full of Upaniṣadic fragrance, the Buddha was, as the canonical works show, a real knower not only of the Veda (*vedajña*), but also of the Vedānta (*vedāntajña*) having fully practised *brahmacarya*.[4] And, like the Vedāntins, after he had attained 'supreme Knowledge', he used to perform not external but internal sacrifices. Once, when a Brāhmaṇa came to him taking in his hands the remainder of his oblation, the Buddha is reported to have addressed him to the following effect: 'Do not deem, O Brāhmaṇa, that purity comes by mere laying wood in fire, for it is external. Having therefore left that course, I kindle my fire only within, which burns for ever, and on that I have my mind rightly fixed for ever.' 'Here in this sacrifice the tongue is the sacrificial spoon, and the heart is the altar of the fire.'[5]

Referring to Vedic sacrifices, which are attended with the slaughter of animals, he holds that they do not make for the achievement of the desired result. Hence great sages do not perform them. On the other hand, the sacrifices in which no animal, such as goat or sheep or cow, is killed are of great reward and should be performed by the wise.[6] This view is expressed by the Blessed One more than once in the canonical works.

The words '*Brahmaprāpti*' (attainment of Brahman) and '*Brahmabhūta*' (identified with Brahman), very well known in Vedānta, are sometimes found in connection with Buddhism in Buddhist works themselves, and there is no reason against accepting them in their Upaniṣadic senses, though with some modification of what is known by the word '*Brahma*' in the compounds. The Buddha or an *arhat* is often spoken of as *Brahmabhūta*, and if, for instance, one reads the *Itivuttaka*[7] with a considerable amount of knowledge of Vedānta, one will naturally be inclined to take it in its Vedāntic significance. The explanation of the word '*Brahma*(*n*)' in such cases by Buddhist authors seems to be coloured by the sectarian point of view. '*Brahma*(*n*)' being interpreted as 'highest or most excellent' (*seṭṭha* or *śreṣṭha*), *Brahmaprāpti* is taken to mean 'attainment of the highest state', and *Brahmabhūta* to mean 'most excellent being'. That in such cases the use of this word in the Vedāntic sense is quite possible is supported by the theory of *vijñāna* or *vijñānamātratā* of Vijñānavādins (idealists).[8]

With regard to questions regarding truths that are too profound and difficult to be understood, the Buddha would keep silent. This attitude

[4] *Saṁyutta Nikāya*, I. 168; *Suttanipāta*, 463.
[5] *Saṁyutta Nikāya*, I.168.
[6] *Ibid.*, I.76.
[7] P. 57 (Pali Text Society edition).
[8] See the present writer's paper on 'Evolution of Vijñānavāda' in the *Indian Historical Quarterly*, March 1934, pp. 1 ff., in which an attempt has been made to show that the *vijñāna* of the Vijñānavādins is, in fact, identical with the Brahman of the Brahmavādins or Vedāntins.

of his was only natural; for the highest Truth is, in fact, Silence (*śāntam*). It was declared by the sages of the Upaniṣads long before the Buddha: 'We do not know, we do not understand, how one can teach it. It is different from the known, it is also above the unknown—thus have we heard from those of old who taught us this.'[9]

Just as the Buddha, like some of his predecessors, including the strict followers of the Upaniṣads, had no faith in Vedic sacrifices, especially in animal-killing therein, so, like some of his other predecessors, he found no place for God, too, in his system of religion, nor did he discuss the creation and destruction of the universe. Similarly, he had no faith in any external means by which the highest goal of life could be attained, and consequently, again like some of his predecessors, he accepted *yoga* and *bhāvanā* (meditation) to achieve that purpose, laying special stress on *brahmacarya*, as in the Upaniṣads. He repeatedly asked his disciples to practise it as a means of putting an end to suffering.[10] Again, when he commissioned his disciples to preach his *dharma* (religion), he advised them to reveal nothing but the consummate, perfect, and completely pure *brahmacarya*.[11]

AVIDYĀ AND KĀMA

Like the Vedāntins or the Indian philosophers in general, the Buddha held that the root cause of *saṁsāra*, from which one seeks escape, it *avidyā* (ignorance), though its interpretation or the process of its action may be different with different thinkers. Again, like the Vedāntins, he maintained very strongly that suffering is due to *kāma* (desire), which brings about one's bondage. This idea has found its fullest possible expression in the Hindu scriptures from the Vedas downwards. It is *kāma* that binds the world; there is no other bond. It is never satisfied, nor is it ever extinguished by the enjoyment of desired objects. On the contrary, it grows stronger and stronger. So a sage says in a Vedic text: 'How great in width are heaven and earth, how far the waters flow, how far fire—to them art thou superior, always great: to thee as such, O Kāma, do I pay homage.'[12] In a number of Vedic passages, *kāma* is identified with fire. And it is not far to seek why this identification is made. Fire is never satisfied with any amount of fuel, so *kāma* can in no way be satisfied with any amount of its object. The sages of the Upaniṣads realized it fully, and the following words give expression to what they felt: 'When the *kāmas* that are in his heart cease, then at once the mortal becomes immortal and obtains here (i.e. in this world) Brahman.'[13] Similar thoughts abound in other texts of the Upaniṣads, and the *Bhagavad-Gītā* is full of them.

[9] *Ke. U.*, I.3. [10] *Mahāvagga*, pp. 12 ff. [11] *Ibid.*, I.11.1.
[12] *A. V.*, IX.2.20. [13] *Ka. U.*, VI.14.

Exactly the same view seems to have been held by the Buddha, as is seen from his declaration that the root cause of suffering is *kāma*. The most significant incident of his life is that he conquered Māra, the Evil one. It is only after this that he became the Buddha. Remove all the legendary character of the story, and the bare truth will reveal itself that it was only after freeing himself from desire that he attained to Buddhahood, Māra being, in the story, the personification of desire. This may be compared with the well-known dialogue between Yama and Naciketas in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*. If one considers the tremendous evil consequence of pursuing *kāma*, it will be evident that there is no better word for its expression. '*Māra*' literally signifies what is meant by the word '*mṛtyu*' (death), both of them being derived from the same root *mṛ* (to die). Who is it that does not know that *kāma* brings about death? The literature of the country tells the same story in one way or another.

We are told that whatever misfortunes there are, here or hereafter, they are rooted in ignorance (*avidyā*) and desire (*kāma*). Ignorance means non-perception or wrong perception of truth. One who does not perceive, or wrongly perceives, the truth imagines things which have no existence at all, and thinks evil to be good; and naturally there arises desire, and it leads man astray, bringing about his ruin.[14] The cessation of desire is possible only after the removal of ignorance, which requires for its own disappearance knowledge, or perfect wisdom, or perfection of wisdom.

ĀTMAN AND ANĀTMAN

The sages of the Upaniṣads solved the problem by realizing that there is only the Self or Ātman without a second: 'I am below, I am above, I am behind, before, right and left—I am all this.'[15] And they declared: 'If a man understands himself to be the Ātman, what could he wish or desire for the sake of which he should pursue the body?'[16] For 'He who sees, perceives, and understands this, loves the Self, delights in the Self, revels in the Self, rejoices in the Self, becomes a *svarāṭ* (self-resplendent or self-ruled)'.[17] That being the case, there is nothing that could be an object of desire. Nor is there anything to be afraid of, for the possibility of fear is only there where there are two, something other than the Self. Thus by the realization of the Self, one becomes completely free not only from desire, but also from anxiety, trouble, and sorrow. So it is said: 'When a man understands that all beings have become only the Self, what delusion, what sorrow, can there be to him who beholds that Unity?'[18] Thus, on these or similar grounds, the sages of the Upaniṣads urged: 'Verily, the Self is to

[14] Cf. *B. G.*, II.62-63. [15] *Chā. U.*, VII.25.1. [16] *Bṛ. U.*, IV.4.12.
[17] *Chā. U.*, VII.25.2. [18] *I. U.*, 7.

be perceived, to be heard of, to be thought of, and to be meditated upon.'[1]

It is not that the Buddha did not listen to these declarations. He did; but his perception of the Self was quite different; for he thought that instead of being the cause of liberation, as held by the followers of the Upaniṣads, the knowledge of the Self was, in fact, the real cause of bondage. The notion of 'I' and 'mine' is the cause of bondage, and, as such, it must be shaken off. On the point of the necessity of release from bondage, both the Vedāntin and the Buddha are at one, but, while the former maintains that it can only be effected by the knowledge of the Self, the latter differs saying that the notion of 'I' and 'mine' can in no way disappear, if there really is the existence of the Self. This led him to take quite an opposite, and a very bold, view that there is no Self or Ātman, as it is understood.

Here it is said by his followers that if one knows that, in fact, there is Ātman, one's notions of 'I' and 'mine' (*ahaṅkāra* and *mamakāra*) do not disappear, and consequently there is no cessation of one's suffering. For, when a man sees that there is Ātman, he identifies his body with it, and there arises his lasting love for it. This love rouses thirst for comforts, and this thirst prevents him from realizing the transitoriness of the objects he wants to enjoy, and he loves to think that they are his and adopts means for their attainment. Where there is the notion of the Self, there arises also the notion of the non-Self, and owing to this division of the Self and the non-Self, there spring up feelings of attachment and aversion from which all evils arise. Thus, once a devotee is said to have extolled the Buddha: 'If there is the notion of "I" (*ahaṅkāra*) in the mind, the continuity of birth does not cease, nor does go away the notion of "I" from the mind, if there is the notion of Ātman. And there is no other teacher than you in the world advocating the absence of Ātman. Therefore there is no other way to deliverance than your doctrine.' And it is said by a prominent teacher of Buddhism that, as all the passions and evils arise from the notion of Ātman (*satkāyadṛṣṭi*), and the object of the notion is Ātman itself, its very existence is denied.

In order to root out desire (*kāma*), attempts are made in the doctrine of the Buddha to show that there is neither the subject nor the object of desire, and if that be so, naturally desires can in no way arise. Thus there is the cessation of desire, whereupon liberation or *nirvāṇa* follows as a natural sequence.

The question is, How can it be held that there is no existence of the subject and the object of desire in the face of their clear perception by

[1] *Br. U.*, II.4.5.

every one of us? The solution is supplied by what is known as the doctrine of *anātman* (absence of Self) or *nairātmya.*

TWOFOLD NAIRATMYA

The denial of Ātman is called *nairātmya,* literally 'the state of being devoid of Ātman'. Radically, the word '*ātman*' means 'nature' (*sva-bhāva*: 'own being'), which never undergoes any change, nor depends on anything for its being. The Self is called Ātman, because, according to those who believe in it, it has the nature described above. Therefore it is held to be eternal.

This *nairātmya* is twofold: *pudgala-nairātmya* and *dharma-nairātmya. Pudgala* is nothing but what is known to us by such terms as *sattva, jīva, puruṣa,* and so on, that is, the Self. By *pudgala-nairātmya,* we understand that what is believed to be Self or Ātman has no independent nature of its own, and consequently no existence in fact, and therefore it is not a thing in reality (*vastusat*), but exists merely in imagination as a name, a term, a designation, a convention for serving the purpose of ordinary life. Similarly, the *dharmas* or things around us, internal or external, have not their Ātman or independent nature, because they depend for their being on causes and conditions (*pratītya-samutpāda*). And how can that which is not in its own nature be in the nature of others? Therefore the things visible also have no existence in fact, and are merely imaginary. This is *dharma-nairātmya.*

ESSENTIAL OUTLOOK OF VIJÑĀNAVĀDA AND ŚŪNYAVĀDA

This idea lies at the root of the two well-known schools of Buddhism, Vijñānavāda and Śūnyavāda. Taking its stand on such statements of the Buddha as 'All this is nothing but *citta*', a statement undoubtedly based on the Upaniṣads, as we shall see later on, the Vijñānavāda postulates the existence of *citta* or mind only, as the Vedānta does Brahman only, and utterly denies all external things which are, according to it, just like the phantoms seen in a dream. Impurities or passions (*kleśas*), such as desire, obstruct the attainment of liberation, and, as such, are regarded as a 'cover' (*āvaraṇa*). They are due to the conception or notion of Ātman or Self (*ātmadṛṣṭi*), and so they will disappear only when one really understands that, in fact, there is nothing that can be called Self (*pudgala-nairātmya*). Then follows liberation.

Man is steeped in ignorance about the things he sees around him, for the things he sees are not, in fact, what they appear to him, they being only the vibrations (*spanda*) or transformations (*pariṇāma*) of *citta.* Such ignorance is also an obstruction and, like darkness, covers the knowable

(*jñeya*), the real truth, and is known to be a 'cover of the knowledge' (*jñeyāvaraṇa*).[20] When this cover is completely removed by means of the right view of things (i.e. *dharma-nairātmya*), one becomes omniscient (*sarvajña*).

The advocates of the Śūnyavāda, who also uphold the doctrine of *pudgala-* and *dharma-nairātmya* or *śūnyatā*, as explained above, teach us that there is nothing real, as everything is devoid of its innate or independent nature ; that being the case, anything that appears before us depends for its being on causes and conditions. It cannot therefore be said that there is anything in its own or innate form (*sva-rūpa*). We see a thing, no doubt, but it appears to us in its imposed (*āropita*) form, and not in its own form (*sva-rūpa*).

Now, if a thing visible to us is only in its imposed form, of what kind is it then in reality? What is its own form? The answer is that it is *dharmatā* (the state of being a *dharma*, thing). But what is *dharmatā*? Own being (*sva-bhāva*). What is own being? Nature (*prakṛti*). And nature? That which is called voidness (*śūnyatā*). What does voidness mean? The state of being devoid of own being (*naiḥsvābhāvya*). And what are we to understand by it? That which is 'suchness' (*tathatā*). What is 'suchness'? Being of such nature (*tathābhāva*), that is, the state of being not liable to change (*avikāritva*), the state of permanent existence (*sadāvasthāyitā*).[21]

More explicitly, the *svabhāva* of a thing means only that which is independent of another (*paranirapekṣa*), and thus, having not been before, it does not come into being ; not *abhūtvā bhāvaḥ*—having not been before, coming into existence. Therefore the *svabhāva* of fire is nothing but its non-origination (*anutpāda*), and not its heat, because it depends on its causes and conditions, and comes into being after having not been at first. Thus there appears nothing, nor does anything disappear ; nothing has an end, nor is anything eternal ; nothing is identical, nor is anything differentiated ; nothing comes hither, nor does anything go thither ; there is only dependent origination (*pratītya-samutpāda*), where ceases all expression (*prapañcopaśama*).

Viewing things in this light, these teachers, the propounders of the doctrine of *śūnyatā*, which in this system implies simply the rejection of all sorts of imposition (*sarvāropa-nirākriyā*), declare that anything, external or internal, that appears to us as existing is, in fact, unreal, like the imaginary town in the sky (*gandharvanagara*). Thus, there being nothing

[20] Some would explain that, as *kleśas* themselves are regarded as a 'cover', so are also the things which are knowable (*jñeya*).

[21] *Madhyamaka-vṛtti* (Bibliotheca Buddhica, IV), pp. 264 65.

internally or externally, the notion of 'I' and 'mine', technically *satkāyadṛṣṭi*, disappears completely, as there is neither the subject nor the object of the notion. The disappearance of this notion is followed by the disappearance of *saṁsāra* which has its roots struck deep in it. The sole object of the followers of the Śūnyavāda is to root out the notion of 'I' and 'mine', or the Self and that which belongs to the Self.

We may appropriately give here the following passage from a very old work, *Āryadharma-saṅgīti-Sūtra*:

> 'One who believes in the void (*śūnyatā*) is not attracted by worldly things, because they are baseless. He is not delighted by gain, nor is he cast down by not gaining. He does not feel proud of his glory, nor does he hold back from lack of glory. Scorn does not make him shrink, nor does praise elate him. Neither does he feel attached to pleasures, nor does he feel aversion to pain. He who is not so attracted by worldly things knows what the void means. Therefore one who believes in the void has neither likes nor dislikes. He knows that which he might like to be only void, and regards it as void only. He who likes and dislikes anything does not know the void; and he who indulges in quarrel or dispute or debate with anyone does not know this to be only void, nor does he so regard it.'[22]

When, by the meditation on *śūnyatā*, the idea of 'I' and 'mine' vanishes, both internally and externally, all the *upādānas* (holdings-up), viz. desire (*kāma*), wrong views (*mithyā-dṛṣṭi*), belief in rites (*śīlavrata-parāmarśa*), and soul-theories (*ātma-vāda*), also vanish. This extinction of *upādānas* leads to the cessation of birth. Thus *karmas* and passions being extinct, *mokṣa* (liberation) is obtained.

VIJÑĀNA IN BUDDHISM AND VEDĀNTA

The Vijñānavāda referred to above is said to be based on the Upaniṣads. This will be perfectly clear if one reads the Vedānta in the light thrown by such old teachers as Gauḍapāda. In the Upaniṣadas, Brahman, which is identical with Ātman, is only *vijñāna* (consciousness) or *jñāna*. Therefore Brahmavāda or Ātmavāda is, in fact, Vijñānavāda. Somehow or other, when all these three, Brahman, Ātman, and *vijñāna*, are regarded as identical, the following and similar Upaniṣadic texts can very well be quoted as referring to *vijñāna*: 'Verily, all this is Ātman.'[23] 'Brahman alone is all this.'[24] 'All this is Brahman.'[25] 'There is no diversity here.

[22] As quoted in the *Śikṣā-samuccaya* (Eng. trans. by Bendall and Rouse), p. 265.
[23] *Chā. U.*, VII.25.2. [24] *Mu. U.*, II.2.11. [25] *Chā. U.*, III.14.1.

He who perceives diversity here goes from death to death.'[26] Thus, to say all this is Brahman or Ātman amounts to saying that all this is *vijñāna*, or, in other words, all this is a *vivarta* (illusory manifestation) or *pariṇāma* (transformation) of Brahman or *vijñāna*. Compare this with the following words which are said to have been uttered by the Buddha himself: 'O the sons of Jina, the three planes are only *citta*.' The words *citta*, *manas*, and *vijñāna* are synonymous. It is evident from the above that, in both the Vedāntic and Buddhistic schools of thought, the external world has, in fact, no reality; and though it appears to us, this appearance itself is due to *avidyā*, according to the Vedāntins, or to *vāsanā* (mental impression), as the Buddhists would maintain. In other words, it is *avidyā* or *vāsanā* that changes *vijñāna* into external phenomena as in illusion, mirage, and dream.

The idealistic interpretation of the Vedānta is fully supported by Gauḍapāda in his *Āgamaśāstra* or *Māṇḍūkya-kārikā*, from which a few passages are quoted below:

'This duality, having the subject and the object, is only the vibration of *citta*. *Citta* has, in fact, no object; therefore it is said to be always free from attachment (*asaṅga*: having no attachment or relation to an object)' (IV. 72). Here vibration of *citta* implies the activity of the mind, owing to which objects are presented. 'As the movements of a fire-brand appear to be straight or crooked etc., so the vibrations of *vijñāna* appear as the subject and the object. As a fire-brand, when it does not move, has no appearance (of its being straight etc.) and (thus) is not born, so when the *vijñāna* does not vibrate, it has no appearance (of the subject and the object), and thus it is not born. When a fire-brand moves, the appearances are not produced from anything other than that, and when it is at rest, they are not in a place other than that, nor do they enter then into that' (IV.47-49). 'As the appearances are produced only when there is the vibration of *vijñāna*, so they have no other cause apart from this *vijñāna*; nor do they rest in anything other than this, or enter into it, when the vibration of *vijñāna* ceases' (IV.51). 'As in dream, owing to illusion, the mind moves having the appearance of duality (of the subject and the object), so does it in the waking state, owing to illusion, having the appearance of duality. There is no doubt that as in dream the mind, though without a second, appears in the form of duality, so does undoubtedly the mind in the waking state appear in the form of duality, though it is without a second' (III.29-30).

Let one read here the following few lines from the *Laṅkāvatāra*,[27] the

[26] *Bṛ. U.*, IV.4.19.

[27] Edited by B. Nanjio.

well-known work on the Buddhist Vijñānavāda: 'All this is *citta*. It comes forth in two ways—in the forms of the subject and the object. There is neither Ātman, nor anything belonging to it' (III.121). 'There is only *citta*, and not the visible. The *citta* comes forth in two ways—in the form of the subject as well as of the objects. It is neither eternal, nor has it annihilation' (III.65). 'The *citta* of man inclines (to its objects) in the form of the subject as well as of the objects. There is no characteristic of the visible as imagined by fools' (X.58). That the visible universe is the creation of *vijñāna*, or *manas*, or *citta* is found also in the *Maṇḍala-brāhmaṇa Upaniṣad* (V.1), where we read: 'The mind which is the author of the creation, continued existence, and dissolution of the three worlds, disappears, and that is the highest state of Viṣṇu.'[28]

In Vijñānavāda the theory of *vijñaptimātratā* or *vijñānamātratā* is well known. Literally, *vijñānamātra* means 'simply *vijñāna*', and its state is *vijñānamātratā*. When the *vijñāna* does not perceive any object whatsoever, it rests only in itself. This state of resting of the *vijñāna* only in itself is called *vijñānamātratā*. And this is, as the Vijñānavādins say, *mukti* (deliverance). This *vijñānamātratā* is expressed in the words '*ātmasaṁsthajñāna*' (*jñāna* that rests in itself) by Gauḍapāda in his *Āgamaśāstra* (III.38). This expression is undoubtedly based on such statements of the Upaniṣads as the following: 'Where one sees nothing else, hears nothing else, understands nothing else, that is the Infinite (*bhūman*). . . . The Infinite is immortal. The finite is mortal. "Sir, in what does the Infinite rest?" "In its own greatness, or not even in greatness." '[29] The exposition of Gauḍapāda in regard to this (III.46) is very clear. Says he: 'When the *citta* does not fall into a state of oblivion, nor is distracted again, nor is unsteady, nor has it any sense-image, then it becomes Brahman.'[30]

Thus the *vijñānamātratā* of the Vijñānavādins is, in fact, the *Brahmabhāva* of the Brahmavādins or Vedāntins. *Brahmabhāva* means the 'state of Brahman' or 'becoming Brahman'. And this is the *mukti* of the Brahmavādins. Therefore, on this point, which is a vitally important one, there is entire agreement between the two Vijñānavādins—the Vedāntins and the Buddhists. Or, to put it in other words, the original author of the Buddhist Vijñānavāda, i.e. the Buddha himself, understood the Vijñānavāda or Brahmavāda of the Upaniṣads in the same light as adopted by such teachers as Gauḍapāda and the author of the *Yogavāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa*. It is therefore not too much to say, at least so far as the present

[28] *Maṇḍala-brāhmaṇa Upaniṣad* (Mysore, 1900), p. 12. [29] *Chā. U.*, VII.24.1.

[30] See the present writer's papers on 'Evolution of Vijñānavāda' in the *Indian Historical Quarterly*, March 1934, pp. 1 ff. and 'The *Gauḍapāda-kārikā* and the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad*' in the *Proceedings and Transactions of the Second All India Oriental Conference, Calcutta, 1922*, pp. 459 ff.

point is concerned, that the Buddha was really a knower of the Vedānta, as observed above. It can further be said that the *prapañcopaśama* of the Mādhyamikas and the later Upaniṣads such as the *Māṇḍūkya*; *vijñāna* or *vijñaptimātratā* of the Vijñānavādins; *nirvāṇa* of the Buddhists in general; *Brahmaprāpti* or *Brahmabhāva* of the Vedāntins; *kevala jñāna* of the Sāṁkhyas; *yoga* or *cittavṛtti-nirodha* of the *yogins*; and *parama pada* of Viṣṇu in the Upaniṣads and the devotional literature of the country—are all, in fact, different expressions of one and the same thing.

It is evident from the dialogue between Assaji and Sāriputta, as described in the *Vinaya*,[31] that the spirit of the truth that dawned upon the Buddha lies in his explanation of the origination and cessation of the objects that proceed from a cause. This refers to his law of twelve-membered cause of existence (*dvādaśāṅga nidāna*) and dependent origination (*pratītya-samutpāda*). They show the gradual origination of the whole mass of sufferings, the starting point of which is ignorance (*avidyā*), and also its cessation through the cessation of its fundamental cause, ignorance.

THE BODHISATTVA IDEAL

Now, the cessation of ignorance depends only on *bodhi* (supreme Knowledge) which is in no way easy to acquire. An aspirant after it, known in the Buddhist system as *bodhisattva*, has to strive for it throughout his life doing various duties. The ideal of this practice (*caryā*) of a *bodhisattva* is very great; indeed, there is nothing more ennobling in Buddhism than this. It is not the subtle truth nor the profound philosophy of Buddhism that attracted people of so many lands, for we cannot think that the average person understood them thoroughly and then accepted the religion, for, in the words of the Buddha himself, they are very difficult to perceive and to understand, unattainable by reasoning, intelligible only to the wise. What is it then in Buddhism that won the hearts of the people? It is the noble aim to be achieved, the discipline to be observed, and the practice to be made throughout life by a *bodhisattva* in order to attain *nirvāṇa*.

Before becoming a *buddha*, anyone who strives for Buddhahood is a *bodhisattva*, and everyone can become a *buddha*. Therefore the *bodhisattva* stage is the stage of discipline preparatory to the attainment of *bodhi*.

The first and the most important thing in the life of a *bodhisattva* is *mahāmaitrī* (great love) and *mahākaruṇā* (great compassion). *Maitrī* is that love for all beings (*sarva sattva*) which a mother feels towards her only and very dear son. The *maitrī* that prompts a *bodhisattva* to offer his body and life and all sources of good (*kuśalamūla*) to all living beings without any

[31] *Mahāvagga*, I.23.

expectation of return is *mahāmaitrī*. The thought or intention to work for the deliverance of all sentient beings, fallen into the unfathomable and unbounded ocean of *saṁsāra*, is called *karuṇā* (compassion). And that *karuṇā*, with which a *bodhisattva* desires *bodhi* or enlightenment not first for himself, but for others, is *mahākaruṇā*. We are told that the prince of Kapilavastu, Siddhārtha, when he was in the stage of a *bodhisattva*, was moved not by his own sufferings, but by those of the world; such was his love and kindness towards it.

Therefore a *bodhisattva*, with a heart full of *mahāmaitrī* and *mahākaruṇā*, knowing thoroughly the miseries, sorrows, and sufferings of the world, identifies his own happiness with the removal of the sufferings of all creatures, and meditates as follows: 'When pain and fear are not pleasant to me, as they are not to others, then how am I different from others that I should preserve myself, and not others?'

Thinking thus, a *bodhisattva*, in order to put an end to pain and attain the height of joy, both for himself and all other living beings of the world, makes his faith (*śraddhā*) firm and fixes his mind on *bodhi*, praying: 'May I become a *buddha* to effect the good and happiness of all sentient beings of the world and to put an end to all their sufferings.' 'By this good action of mine, may I become ere long a *buddha*, so that, for the good of the universe, I may preach the Truth, delivering thereby all living beings, now subjected to various sufferings.'

Undoubtedly, a *bodhisattva* wants the cessation of suffering, *nirvāṇa*, but first not for himself, but for others. Until every living being is delivered, he does not desire his own deliverance. He does not want to cross the ocean of existence only for himself, but wants to make others also cross it. Extremely difficult though the path of a *bodhisattva* may be, yet he dares to tread it out of his love for his fellow-beings. He takes the vow and resolves that, so long as there is no end to birth, he will observe the practices of a *bodhisattva* for the well-being of all. And when he once takes the vow, he would on no account give it up. He does not want to gain enlightenment hurriedly, but would wait till the last individual of the universe is emancipated from the bondage of *saṁsāra*.

The duties of a *bodhisattva* are multifarious, and they can hardly be performed by anyone. Hence he attempts to understand their vital points (*marmasthāna*). What are these vital points? Sacrifice of all that is in one's possession—one's person, enjoyments, and merits—throughout all time. And with what object? The good of all living beings.

Indeed, for a *bodhisattva*, there is no sphere of success (*siddhikṣetra*) other than that of sentient beings, all success in his life being dependent only on his service to them. So they are regarded by him as *cintāmaṇis*

(thought gems), or *bhadraghaṭas* (vases of fortune), or *kāmadhenus* (wish-yielding cows); and they are served by him as teachers and gods. He is to worship the *tathāgatas* (*buddhas*), and he thinks that this can be done only by serving the world. Hence he says: 'In order to worship the *tathāgatas*, I undertake the duties of a servant of the world. Let the multitude of people put their feet on my head, or let them kill me, let the lord of the world (*buddha*) be pleased. The kind-hearted *tathāgatas* have identified themselves with the world, indeed they are seen in the form of beings; these are the only lords. Why then show them disrespect? This is the worship of the *tathāgatas*, this is the accomplishment of one's own good, this is the removal of the world's trouble. Let this therefore be my holy practice (*vrata*).'

How a *bodhisattva* serves humanity comes out in these words: '*Nirvāṇa* lies in the surrender of all things, and my mind is inclined to do so; therefore, if I must surrender all, it is better to give it to all beings. I yield myself to them; let them do with me whatever they like. They may smile at me or revile me, bestrew me with dust. Or they may play with my body, or laugh and play wanton; when my body is dedicated to all, I need not think about it. They may get any work they like done by me to their own satisfaction. May there never be any evil to any one from me. May all who attribute some offence to me, or all who do any harm to me, or all who laugh at me, attain enlightenment (*bodhi*). May I be a help to the helpless, a guide to the travellers, a boat, or a dike, or a bridge for those who want to go to the other side.

'May I be a lamp to those who want it, a bed for those who require it, a servant of all. May I have the power to dispose myself in various ways, so that all living beings in space may live upon me until they are liberated.'[32]

'Let whatever suffering the world has come to me, and may the merits of the *bodhisattva* make it happy.'[33]

The same idea has struck its root deep in Brāhmaṇism, especially in Vaiṣṇavism. Rantideva supplicates fervently in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (IX.21.12): 'I do not want the highest state from God, nor do I want the attainment of the eight powers (*siddhis*), nor the absence of rebirth, but I want to undergo the sufferings of all beings, being in them, so that they may become free from miseries.'

Dhruva, who was asked by his beloved Lord, when He appeared before him, to choose a boon, says: 'I pray for the well-being of the universe. I want no boon.'

[32] *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, III. pp. 11-14, 16-21. [33] *Ibid.*

In the *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra* (II.33), Mahādeva says to Pārvatī: 'O Parameśvari, if good is done to the universe, the Lord of it is pleased, since He is its soul, and it depends on Him.'

The *Gītā* also says that persons engaged in the good of all beings attain *Brahma-nirvāṇa* (V.25) or the supreme Being (XII.4). And the following is quoted in Śrīkaṇṭha's commentary on the *Brahma-Sūtra* (I.2.1): 'The worship of Śiva consists in being of service to all, conferring benefits on all, and giving assurance of safety to all.' This idea has found its fullest expression also in the following short *mantra* (formula) in a daily rite called *tarpaṇa* incumbent on every householder: 'May the three worlds be satisfied! May the world, including all from Brahmā (the Creator) to a stump of grass, be satisfied!' The sages of the Vedas make devout prayers: 'May all directions (*diś*) be my friend!'[34] 'May all beings see me with the eyes of a friend! May I see all beings with the eyes of a friend! May we all see all beings with the eyes of a friend!'[35]

[34] *A. V.*, XIX.16.6.

[35] *Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā*, XXXVI.18.

33

BUDDHISM IN INDIAN LIFE AND THOUGHT

THE disappearance of Buddhism from the land of its origin is a sad irony of history and is a conundrum which is bound to puzzle the historian of India's religion and culture. Buddhism stimulated and enriched the intellectual and spiritual wealth of the country, and its achievements and contributions have been varied and numerous in India and outside. It is the first world religion which evolved in India and crossed over its frontiers, by virtue of its intrinsic vitality and spiritual energy, into the vast lands of Asia and parts of North Africa. It is a happy evidence of the love of mankind for things of the Spirit that Buddhism still preserves its paramount position as one of the greatest religions of the world. Judged by such external standards as the number of its adherents, it can still claim to be the biggest religion in the world, in spite of the fact that it has long ceased to be a resurgent missionary creed.

The decadence of Buddhism and its ultimate disappearance from India as an institutional religion unfolds a sad tale. But it will be a mistake to suppose that Buddhism as a spiritual force is extinct in the land of its genesis. It lives for certain, but in a form totally assimilated to Hinduism, so that it is not easily discernible to a casual observer. Sir Charles Eliot, in his monumental work *Hinduism and Buddhism*, quotes with approval the view of Hardy 'that Buddhism did not waste away in India until rival sects had appropriated from it every thing they could make use of'. Buddhism may not exist in India as a sect; that is because it has permeated the entire religious and philosophic thought of India and percolated into the deepest recesses of the religious mentality of the present-day Hindus. The consequence is that it will not be incorrect to say that every Hindu is a Buddhist, in spite of all outward appearances to the contrary. Even Islam, in spite of the rigid simplicity of its creed and rituals, has not been able to keep itself free from the influence of the superstitions and beliefs of decadent Buddhism. The worship of the tombs of dead *pīrs* (Muslim saints) is only a relic of the Buddhist worship of *stūpas* (pagodas) which is not checkmated by change of creed.[1]

[1] Cf. Aurel Stein, *Sand-buried Ruins of Kholan* (Hurst & Blackett, Ltd., London, 1904), pp. 180, 226, 229, 245, 247, 328, 398.

BUDDHISM AS A RELIGION

In order to obviate a natural and facile misunderstanding, it should be clearly recognized that Buddhism, as preached by the sage of the Śākya clan and as it appears in the recorded sermons in the Pali canon, was not meant to be a full-fledged religion covering the entire gamut of human interests. The Buddha claimed to have discovered a path to salvation from the evanescent, miserable existence in the world, and he preached this to all and sundry. It was an axiomatic truth with the Buddha, and perhaps with the contemporary intelligentzia, that this worldly existence is full of suffering, which fastens within its coils and clutches all sentient beings. Death does not mean its cessation. Death is the necessary concomitant of birth and vice versa. There will be an end to suffering, if only one can go beyond this cycle of birth and death. This consummation is called *nirvāṇa*, which has, unfortunately, a negative connotation. The Buddha uniformly evaded all discussion and speculation regarding the positive nature of this end to suffering. He emphasized the truth that everything is subject to change—birth, growth, decay, and death. Death is only the harbinger of a new birth, which necessarily entails the succeeding stages which are punctuated with pain and suffering. The Buddha did not believe in a permanent essence either in the subjective personality or in the objective plurality. He left the nature of ultimate Reality, as positive or negative, personal or impersonal, an open question.

ITS ATTITUDE TOWARDS SECULAR VALUES

With this attitude of unrelieved condemnation of biological existence, it was not compatible that the intermediate problems of social values, family affiliations, and economic and political betterment of the conditions of human life should engage the attention of the Buddha or his followers. He therefore did not think it fit or necessary to prescribe the laws of conduct for the inevitable transactions in the sphere of the family and in social, political, and national interests. He did not consider it worth-while to lay down laws or rules for the regulation of such important events in human life as the birth of a child, marriage, inheritance of property, death, or duties to the departed spirits. He took them for granted. He did not encourage a revolt or rebellion against the social and political institutions, in so far as they were not morally objectionable. On the contrary, he avoided any reforms which would involve him in conflict with the custodians of social and political institutions. He, however, attached supreme importance to the claims of spiritual life, which could override the lower claims of family or social duties and obligations. It is also a noticeable feature of the later career of Buddhism as a world religion that these

questions and considerations were never seriously taken into account at any stage.

The Buddha condemned the ritualistic religion of the Vedas not only because it was bound up with injury to animal life, but also on the ground of its failure to bring about the ultimate good. Vedic ritualism did not always, and exclusively, aim at a blessed life in heaven after death, though it was a matter of supreme importance to the religious aspirant. Vedic religion did not despise the claims of such temporal benefits and advantages as long life, good health, economic prosperity, acquisition of political power and ascendancy, the duties and happiness of conjugal life, and devotion and obligation to parents, teachers, and guardians of law. It sought to govern the relation between the rulers and the people, the laws of inheritance, the rules of trade and commerce, and all other interests through religious sanctions, so far as their proper and equitable execution and adjustment were concerned. In one word, Vedic religion was comprehensive of the interests of the present and future life,[2] not only on the individual plane, but also in its extended scope of socio-political affiliations. The Buddha did not condemn this side of Vedic religion, and it may not be wrong to assume that he gave tacit approval to it. His attitude was one of non-interference in these matters. He did neither deny that these sociological functions might have a bearing on the development of spiritual outlook nor did he show any preference for these customary laws.

ITS COMPROMISE WITH POPULAR SENTIMENTS

Even in the course of his evangelistic career, the Buddha had to recognize the spiritual merit of donations and benefactions to the Order of monks and the building of monasteries. These were acclaimed as pious acts, and were declared to be the conditions of achieving blessed life in heaven, though not of attaining salvation (*nirvāṇa*). If we are to believe the stories recorded in the Jātakas, Apadānas, and the commentary on the *Dhammapada*, the higher and better grades of life in the social scale in this world were also regarded by him as the outcome of pious deeds in the past life. These considerations tend to prove that even ritualistic religion came to regain a share in the scheme of spiritual progress from the Buddhist perspective also. The ritualistic religion of the Vedas, which promises to secure these advantages of intermediate value, ought not, therefore, to have received unqualified condemnation. This accommodative attitude to popular modes of worship might be a concession, but was felt to be inevitable even by the Buddha and his followers. But herein lay the potential seed of dissension

[2] *Dvividho hi vedokto dharmaḥ, pravṛtti lakṣaṇo nivṛtti lakṣaṇaśca. Prāṇināṁ sākṣāt abhyudaya-niḥśreyasa hetuḥ*—Śaṅkara in his Introduction to *Gītā-bhāṣya*.

and dispute between the Buddhist Order of monks and the Brāhmaṇa priesthood, who were the custodians of popular religion.

Buddhism was, in the beginning, a purely ascetic movement with its orientation to the goal of salvation, which connoted total cessation of metempsychosis (*saṁsāra*). It could only have appealed to the community of ascetics whose number was large enough at the time of the Buddha's appearance, even if we make due allowance for the natural exaggeration of figures. But, even during the lifetime of the Buddha, the number of lay men and women assumed a fairly large dimension. And these admirers were not all motivated by the passion for *nirvāṇa*. They wanted intermediate goods and values, such as economic prosperity and political power on earth, either in the present or next birth, or a blessed life of enjoyment in heaven. This was at once a point of strength and of weakness. The concession to popular beliefs contributed to the economic strength of the Order, but the purity of the salvation-motive underwent a considerable dilution, and this involved a spiritual deterioration and corresponding decadence of religious fervour, which initially characterizes a protestant creed.

ITS PECULIAR POSITION AND SOURCE OF STRENGTH

Even in the heyday of its prosperity and triumph, Buddhism could not enjoy paramountcy as a religion. There were other ascetic Orders which challenged its supremacy. But the toughest and most stubborn opponents of Buddhism were furnished by the Brāhmaṇas, who were not intellectually inferior to the Buddhist Order. The intellectual power of the Order, on the contrary, was maintained only by the continual accession of learned Brāhmaṇas into the Buddhist fold. From the very beginning, the pillars of the Church were constituted by its Brāhmaṇa adherents. Śāriputra, Maudgalyāyana, and Mahākāśyapa were Brāhmaṇas. In the later career of the Buddhist Order, the intellectual stalwarts in philosophy, logic, ethics, poetry, and drama were almost entirely recruited from the priestly class. Buddhism maintained its superiority, and commanded the admiration and reverence of the intelligentzia and aristocracy, so long as it possessed men of surpassing spiritual power and intellectual acumen. The Buddhist patriarchs, such as Aśvaghoṣa, Nāgārjuna, Āryadeva, Asaṅga, Vasubandhu, Diṅnāga, Dharmakīrti, Dharmottara, and their like, were born in Brāhmaṇa families, educated in Vedic lore, and reared in orthodox tradition. They were intellectual giants and produced works of subtle dialectic and overpowering logical cogency in support of Buddhist tenets.

The periodic upheavals and triumphs of Buddhism were due to the influence of men of superb holiness and astounding intellectual equipment

found in the Order. Harṣavardhana was attracted by the Buddhist religion because Divākaramitra was its custodian. The portraiture of the career and activities of this Buddhist saint by Bāṇabhaṭṭa, in the eighth chapter of his *Harṣacarita,* is a masterpiece in diction and emotive and intellectual appeal. Divākara has been described as the second Buddha, and not without justification. He was the professor of all the Śāstras in their full extent, and the adherents of rival creeds and sects used to take lessons in their own Śāstras from this Buddhist saint and scholar. The Śaivas, the Jains, and even the adherents of heterodox creeds, noted for their hostility to the Buddhist ideology, were schooled by him in their own scriptures and traditions. He was formerly a great Vedic scholar and an orthodox Brāhmaṇa. It is an evidence of the continually resurgent vitality of Buddhism, both as cult and culture, that it was strengthened by a continual succession of teachers, preachers, and saints whose moral integrity, spiritual holiness, and intellectual endowment were unchallengeable. These great minds were not attracted to Buddhism by love of wanton life or lure of the bizarre, as Udayana in his *Nyāya-kusumāñjali* and *Ātma-tattva-viveka* would have us believe. The spiritual earnestness and the intellectual integrity of these great writers and thinkers cannot be called in question except by a fanatic or a degenerate philistine.

The strength of Buddhism lay in its persuasive ethics and compelling dialectics, and its irresistible fascination for a holy life fully dedicated to the service of humanity. The cult of the *bodhisattva,* whose ruling passion was the salvation of erring souls and inveterate sinners, the elimination of the suffering of living beings, and the transformation of the earth into a heaven of bliss by the vow of vicarious suffering, quite naturally fired the enthusiasm of ardent souls. So long as the Buddhist Church was fortunate enough to produce such intellectual and spiritual giants, its influence remained pervasive and irresistible.

PROGRESSIVE DEVIATION OF BUDDHISM FROM ANCIENT MOORINGS

The eventual enlargement of the Buddhist pantheon by the creation, in deference to popular sentiments, of a large number of gods and goddesses, who were to be propitiated by an elaborate code of ritualism, progressively accelerated its departure from the pristine simplicity of the creed. The Brāhmaṇa critics found in these innovations no spiritual motive. On the contrary, these were regarded as motivated by sorcery and black magic with the sole purpose of gaining inferior advantages in consolidating economic gains and communal solidarity. Whatever might be the character of the reaction against this drift into elaborate ritualism, it

may not be far from truth to suppose that it weakened the hold of Buddhism on the intellectuals.

All these factors may have contributed to the progressive spiritual enervation and intellectual decline of Buddhism. But it lived where it received the patronage of kings and enjoyed influence with the superstitious aspirants for quick salvation. The disappearance of Buddhism therefore cannot be set down to these shifting adjustments in its *cultus*.

DEPENDENCE OF BUDDHISM ON ROYAL PATRONAGE

Buddhism, of course, suffered enormous persecution at the hands of Mihiragula, the Hūṇa king. But the indigenous rulers were not guilty of religious persecution. They might be adherents of other creeds, but were not intolerant of the Buddhists. In every story of religious persecution in India the motive force was not religious but political. The Buddhist monks took a large share in the political intrigues and received the reward or retribution as their patrons won or lost.

From the very beginning, Buddhism depended on State support and patronage for its existence. The Buddhist monasteries were huge establishments, and the monks had to live on large-scale charities and benefactions. This naturally detracted from their self-reliance and made the Order of monks more and more ease-loving. This shows that the criticism of Udayana was not entirely unjustified. Even in the time of Aśoka, the Buddhist monasteries became the haunts of indolent and feeble-witted persons on account of the assurance of sumptuous food and clothing and facility of entry into the monastic Order. The expulsion of the heretical monks from the monasteries by Aśoka, under the guidance of Moggaliputta Tissa, bears testimony to the abuses of unbounded generosity to the Order. Even the Buddha could not control the recalcitrants during his lifetime, because they were in a majority.

There were, of course, persons who were intellectually powerful and spiritually exalted. But the tendency towards inflation of number by the accession of unworthy men and women was a source of weakness from the beginning. One may not be wide of the mark if one surmises that even if the foreign invaders had not destroyed the monasteries and indulged in orgies of murder of Buddhist monks, the Buddhist Order would have degenerated if royal patronage had ceased to be available in a large measure. In every part of India where the kings and the aristocrats were lukewarm or indifferent to the Order, Buddhism languished and showed signs of decay. This was the result of centralization, which made it flourish in prosperity and wilt in adversity.

DEVELOPMENT OF SECTARIANISM IN BUDDHISM

In course of time, the Buddhist monks adopted a policy of aggressive hostility towards the followers of the Vedic faith. This is attested by the images of several Buddhist gods and goddesses represented as victorious over the gods and goddesses of the orthodox community. There is an image in Nalanda Museum of Lokeśvara trampling upon Śiva and Pārvatī and of Trailokya-vijaya crushing shrieking Gaṇeśa under his feet. This sadly testifies to the deviation of the Buddhist Church from the pristine charity of the Buddha, who counsels to meet hostility with forbearance. Intolerance has the tendency to foster a corresponding reaction from the oppressed. It is no wonder that even in Magadha, the enduring and most powerful stronghold of Buddhism, the Buddha came to be forgotten, and sometimes his images treated with unintentional contumely. Thus a beautiful image of the Buddha in the earth-touching posture (*bhūsparśa-mudrā*) came to be an object of an impious ceremonial bordering on sacrilege. It was called Dheliā Bābā, and people considered it a religious act to strike it with stones and brickbats to ensure the successful conclusion of their projects. Luckily, the image was surreptitiously removed to the Museum, and thus rescued from this queer worship and unconscious sacrilege.

THE STRONG POINTS OF BUDDHISM

In spite of the vehement attacks of the opponents, Buddhism continued to be a tower of strength. In the ninth century, in the reign of Devapāla, Bālaputra Deva, king of Java and Sumatra, sent an embassy with handsome presents for the construction of two monasteries for the accommodation of Indonesian monks at Nālandā. King Devapāla endowed five villages for the maintenance of these monks. Vīra Deva, the son of a Brāhmaṇa minister of Nagarahāra (modern Bamiyan and Jalalabad of Afghanistan), came to look after his compatriot monks and erected two palatial buildings at Nālandā in the early part of the ninth century. The Nālandā University remained a source of attraction to the foreign Buddhists even to its last day. It was the cradle of Buddhist logic and Mahāyāna philosophy. Sanskrit was the medium of instruction. It was catholic in its academic interests, and grammar (*vyākaraṇa*), logic (*hetuvidyā*), and idealism (Vijñānavāda), besides other branches of humanities and sciences, were cultivated with uncommon zeal and devotion. The graduates of Nālandā were treated with distinctive consideration and respect, and the professors were held in deep veneration. It is fortunate that the Pālas, who were sincere Buddhists and styled themselves '*parama-saugatas*' in their inscriptions, ruled for nearly four centuries, and their munificence kept the glory of Nālandā as a centre of learning at a high level. But the Pālas were not intolerant of other faiths. We find

from inscriptions in the *Gauḍa-lekhamālā* that their ministers were learned Brāhmaṇas and staunch adherents of the Vedic faith. The kings and their families were invited to accept consecration with holy water of the Vedic sacrifices, and they responded with due respect.

Under the patronage of the Pāla dynasty, the monasteries of Bihar and Bengal became famous for the learning and holy life of their monks. Saints and scholars were invited by the kings of Tibet from these monasteries to propagate and reform the Buddhist faith in Tibet, which is now one of the centres of Mahāyāna Buddhism. It may be safely presumed that Buddhism would have continued till the present day, had it not been ruthlessly extinguished by the Turks in the thirteenth century. It appears from the testimony of a Tibetan pilgrim called Dharmasvāmin, who visited and studied at Nālandā, that the Buddhist monks reassembled there even after the destruction of the main buildings and library by Bakhtyār Khaljī. But Iltutmish, the Sultan of Delhi, was infuriated at the reassemblage of the Buddhist scholars and ruthlessly massacred the Buddhists. This was the finishing blow. After this, Buddhism as a separate cult remained only in the subterranean region of the Hindu population consisting of ignorant people.

MUTUAL INFLUENCE OF BUDDHISM AND VEDIC RELIGION

Buddhism grew in opposition to the sacrificial religion of the Vedic *karma-kāṇḍa* and in this respect shared the inspiration in common with the other protestant creeds and sects, such as the Jains, the Ājīvikas, the Lokāyatas, etc. Buddhism had to fight with the orthodox priesthood and the other protestant creeds alike. It condemned Vedic sacrifice, involving animal slaughter, and extreme asceticism with equally unabating vigour. The asceticism of the Jaina monks was execrated as futile and obnoxious. The Buddha waged an unrelenting war against the fatalism and determinism of the Ājīvikas. He emphasized the impermanence of all that exists, including the psyche, and laid stress on the law of causation. In fact the doctrine of *pratītya-samutpāda,* which is the Buddhist version of the law of causation, has been made the sheet-anchor of Buddhist philosophy by Nāgārjuna, Śāntarakṣita, and others. The Buddha believed in the law of Karma and stressed the freedom of will as the determining principle of man's present status and future destiny. He was never tired of reiterating the proposition that it is the moral force of the past actions of the person that is responsible for the miserable condition in which he is enmeshed in the world and also that it is again by self-exertion and self-discipline that a man can work out his highest destiny, *nirvāṇa,* in which he is eternally freed from all limitations, sufferings, and weaknesses.

In most of these doctrines, the Buddha has much in common with the Upaniṣadic philosophy. But it does not appear that he was thoroughly conversant with the profound philosophical doctrines of the Upaniṣads. He has criticized the belief in the personal soul and personal God as unreal figments. His criticism of a personal soul is inspired by the realization of the evil consequences entailed by egoism. The ego is shown to be the product of a psychical complex which has no ultimate reality. By this emphasis upon the unreality of the ego, the Buddha does not undermine the foundational doctrine of the Upaniṣadic philosophy. It is true that the Upaniṣads lay emphasis upon the ultimate reality of Ātman, but this Ātman is not identical with the personal ego. It is rather impersonal or superpersonal. It is identical with the absolute Brahman, and the egos are but the distortions and pale expressions of this supreme Principle. Nowhere in the texts of the Pali Tripiṭaka do we come across a passage which can plausibly be interpreted as a criticism of this supreme Principle. In the Upaniṣadic philosophy, the ego has no ultimacy, and attachment to the ego, being the outcome of inveterate ignorance, is condemned as the cause of bondage. The Buddha's affirmation of a Background behind the phenomenal world as something unmade, uncreated, and uncompounded[3] is not logically incompatible with the affirmation of the absolute Brahman in the Upaniṣads.

It is, however, a matter of regret, and a source of confusion, that the utterances of the Buddha, hinting at this ultimate Background, are much too cautious and couched in negative terms. His persistent refusal to enter into a logical dissertation on the nature of *nirvāṇa* and the survival of the enlightened saint in positive and categorical terms has left room for dissension and dispute even among his own followers. The reason for this non-committal attitude might be the realization of the inadequacy and imbecility of human language to give a vivid and unambiguous portraiture of the supreme Truth. The Buddha was obviously fed up with the welter of speculations with which the environment was surcharged and which only caused confusion of thought and bewilderment in ethical and religious conduct. The Upaniṣads also are not less vociferous in their declarations that the ultimate Reality is beyond the reach of human words and concepts.[4] But the affirmative attitude of the Upaniṣadic thought and philosophy is unmistakable and indubious. Herein lies the fundamental difference between Vedic thought and Buddhistic speculation.

The criticism of Vedic sacrifices, on the ground of their inefficiency as a vehicle of ultimate emancipation, is not inconspicuous in the Upaniṣads and also in the *Gītā*, which has been invariably believed by the orthodox

[3] Cf. *Udāna*.
[4] *Yato vāco nivartante aprāpya manasā saha* (*Tai U*, II 4 1)

school to be a faithful exponent of Upaniṣadic philosophy. But there is a fundamental difference in the attitude. The Vedic sacrifices are meant to confer only intermediate goods, such as wealth, prosperity, honour, position, and the like. The vast majority of mankind are eager for these goods and the ritualistic section of the Veda seeks to satisfy the needs which are too common to be ignored. In the Upaniṣads and also in the *Gītā*, it is made abundantly clear that these religious rites, though performed for the sake of acquiring provisional goods, are better than normal bio-physical activities, and have an indirect bearing upon the attainment of the ultimate good, viz. salvation, provided they are conducted in a proper spirit.[5]

We have already shown that the Buddha and his followers had to make concessions regarding the religious merit of such acts as gifts and benefactions to the Order and worship of relics and other symbols. In these respects, the affinities of the orthodox religion, or of the spirit behind it, with Buddhism as a cult are too pronounced. The proper understanding of these aspects of Buddhism should mitigate the vehemence of its attack on what has been regarded as the weak spot of the citadel of orthodoxy. The so-called weakness is only inspired by an open-hearted and handsome recognition of the true nature of the average humanity. It has been recognized, even in the latest developments of the Brāhmaṇical philosophy, that though emancipation from worldly existence and cycle of birth and death (*mokṣa*) is the highest good, and as such should be the supreme end of human life, the intermediate goods, such as economic and political self-sufficiency (*artha* and *kāma*)—and religious merit (*dharma*) as one of their conditions—, cannot be ignored or neglected without peril. It was later emphasized in the Purāṇas and Dharma-śāstras and also recognized in the philosophical works, in spite of their preoccupation with the problem of ultimate emancipation (*mokṣa*), that there is no unbridgeable gulf between the provisional stages of progress and the ultimate good. Buddhism also had to take cognizance of this side of human nature. The cleavage between Vedic religion and the Buddhist cult had therefore no logical justification. This, on the contrary, remained a source of conflict and dispute and ultimately led to the complete estrangement of the intelligentzia from the Buddhist fold.

The Brāhmaṇas, who were the custodians of the national religion, were a highly intellectual class and not apt to acquiesce in defeatism. They assimilated all the points of strength that were found in Buddhism and thus strengthened their position. The idea of self-sacrifice involved in the sacrifice of temporal goods for the furtherance of higher interests and values was not an alien idea to the Brāhmaṇas. The Upaniṣads, the *Gītā*, the

[5] *Tametaṁ vedānuvacanena brāhmaṇā vividiṣanti, yajñena dānena tapasā anāśakena* (*Bṛ. U.*, IV.4.22).

Purāṇas, and the *Mahābhārata* are replete with exhortations and counsels of this nature. Buddhism, however, gathered momentum as it laid progressive emphasis upon the necessity of universal love and sacrifice for furthering the interests of all living beings. It ultimately reached the acme of splendour and power by culminating in the Bodhisattva cult. The *bodhisattvas* are supreme persons who made it their mission of life to toil for the salvation of all living creatures and vicariously suffer for others' sins to make redemption accessible to all. The doctrine of vicarious suffering and self-sacrifice of Jesus Christ for redeeming the sins of erring humanity is in perfect unison with this Buddhist ideal. It was too powerful and enchanting a doctrine not to be assimilated by the champions of orthodoxy. Prahlāda is depicted in the *Bhāgavata* and *Viṣṇu Purāṇas* as the kindred spirit of the *bodhisattva,* who preferred the mission of the amelioration of suffering humanity even to his own salvation.

The influence of this altruistic motive on the Purāṇas is not capable of being repudiated. Of course, the ideal perfect man who has transcended the temptations of the worldly life, as depicted in the *Gītā* (II.55-72), is also found to evince universal love and friendship for all creatures. But even people (men and gods alike), who are covetous of good things of the earth and heaven, are found to pray not only for their own well-being, but also for that of the whole world.

It will not be unwarranted to suppose that Brāhmaṇical writers of these works were impressed by the altruistic ethics of the Buddhists, since we do not come across such sentiments in earlier literature in profusion.

SALUTARY REACTION TO BUDDHIST CRITICISM OF THE CASTE SYSTEM

The Buddhists were hard critics of caste, particularly of the Brāhmaṇa caste, and the hereditary privileges incidental to caste hierarchy. The Buddha himself was not above this caste consciousness.[6] His denunciation of the caste pride of the Brāhmaṇas is couched in vehement language. But, paradoxically, he affirms the superiority of the Kṣatriya caste and claims the highest honour for his own Śākya clan. Had it not emanated from the Buddha, one would have been justified in imputing malice to the accuser. The later Buddhists carried on this crusade against the Brāhmaṇas with unabated vigour.

The Brāhmaṇas were not supine in their self-defence. This unrelenting criticism, however, had a wholesome effect on them. It forewarned them, and made them conscious of the necessity of correcting their shortcomings and back-slidings. It gave the necessary fillip for elevating their intellectual

[6] Cf. *Dīgha Nikāya, Ambaṭṭha-Sutta.*

and moral level. They were constantly put in mind of the necessity of self-cultivation, because of the implacable hostility of their critics. This consciousness of the need of intellectual and moral improvement made the Brāhmaṇas gird themselves up in order to defeat and excel the Buddhists in self-sacrifice and in the task of education of the mass mind through the Purāṇas, which were the source of the Buddhists' popularity. The Brāhmaṇas propounded a code of stringent rules for regulating the conduct of students and *sannyāsins* so that they could win the esteem of the classes and masses by their superior idealism. Śaṅkarācārya's Order of monks was intended to be not only a match for the Buddhist Orders, but to supersede them in popular favour by setting a higher example.

The competition was healthy and ensured constant vigilance and observance of discipline. The brunt of the crusade against caste was to be borne by the Brāhmaṇas, who were made to realize the futility of appeal to heredity unbuttressed by superior intellectual and moral virtues. The propaganda of the Purāṇas, which presented before the people heroes and supermen, served to show that the Buddha was not the only spiritual giant. The torture and tyrannization of Prahlāda by his demoniacal father failed to harm him physically and morally. Prahlāda had the same love for his enemies as for his friends, since he saw them to be manifestations of the Divinity. The grandeur of love and devotion to God had not a less powerful appeal to the average mind than perhaps the stories of self-sacrifice and benevolence of the *bodhisattvas*. The influence was mutual and tended to make both the parties better and rise higher in the moral scale.

It is, however, a mistake, which has become a confirmed belief among the modern social reformers, to suppose that the Buddha was a social reformer. It is true that he stood against the Brāhmaṇa's claim to superiority. But this was inspired by his own caste bias, if not pride. Of course, he did not hesitate to confer ordination on men of inferior castes. But he did nothing to interfere with the social organization of the time.

It is, again, a superstition to presume that the Buddha was a democrat or an advocate of socio-political equality. He was a perfect stranger to these modern ideas, and the political ideal of a *cakravartin* (emperor) ruling over the whole of India was dearest to his heart. So far as the Order was concerned, it was more or less organized on the basis of equal rights subject to the abbot. And so long as he lived he maintained his supremacy in the Church.

INFLUENCE OF THE BUDDHIST ORDER ON ASCETICS OF OTHER SCHOOLS

It is worthy of remark that the ancient orthodox Brāhmaṇas did not take kindly to the institution of ascetics. Paramount importance was

attached to the householder's life. Living on alms or charity was reprobated, and an exception was made only for the student community. Besides, acceptance of gifts (*pratigraha*) was forbidden for all castes except the Brāhmaṇas. The idea that a Kṣatriya or a Vaiśya should beg for alms was an unthinkable horror. We have many instances in the *Mahābhārata* where a Kṣatriya expresses his abomination for receiving charity.[7] One of the charges against the Buddha by the Brāhmaṇas was that he broke this salutary social convention and took to the life of a mendicant, though born as a Kṣatriya.

Whatever might be the attitude of orthodox Brāhmaṇas towards asceticism, they could not prevent the emergence of ascetic Orders. Sometimes these ascetics were organized in large numbers or lived individually. The recognition of the four stages of life (*āśramas*) is found in ancient works of Dharma-śāstras. An elaborate code of rules for the regulation of ascetic life is found in the present *Manu Saṁhitā* and earlier works. It was, however, recognized as the last stage of life, and a person who adopted ascetic life, without fulfilling his obligations to family and society, was looked upon as a delinquent. As a result indiscriminate ordination to ascetic life was restrained.

In course of time, ascetic life came to command spontaneous respect and honour, and homeless ascetics were classed in a position of privilege beyond the jurisdiction of royal authority and social law.[8] Gradually, the liberty to adopt the ascetic life from any stage became so prevalent that the Brāhmaṇas could not withhold recognition from this custom and convention, however obnoxious to family life and social organization it might be from their view-point. Centuries later, Śaṅkarācārya had to defend this custom and justify the freedom from the observance of the threefold antecedent stages as a necessary condition of ascetic life. He relied on a text of the *Jābāla Upaniṣad* in support of his contention.[9] This Upaniṣad had not been commented upon by him, and judged by all standards of exegesis and textual criticism, seems a later work. He had to wage a war against the Mīmāṁsakas who continued to denounce the ascetic order of life.

Sanction to this departure from their original stand against asceticism was rather extorted from the leaders of orthodoxy, and Buddhism may have been responsible for this change. In our judgement, the greatest genius of the Buddha lay in the organization of the ascetic Order and the creation of a code of rules and regulations for the conduct of monastic life. The homeless monks were notorious for their wanderlust, and often lived as

[7] Cf. *Ādiparvan*: Yayāti's fall from heaven.
[8] Cf. *Sāmaññaphala-Sutta*: the talk between Ajātaśatru and the Buddha.
[9] *Yadahareva virajet tadahareva pravrajet—Jābāla Upaniṣad*, 3.

individual hermits having their own law. Henceforward the monks were to live in monasteries as members of a common organization subject to a common code of law. This custom was imitated by other sects also. There is great force in the contention of Sir Charles Eliot that the organization of monastic Order was the original creation of the Buddha. We feel inclined to believe with Eliot that 'Śaṅkara's approval, both in theory and in practice, of the monastic life is Buddhistic rather than Brahmanical'[10] in inspiration, and that Śaṅkara 'perceived the advantage of the cenobitic life for organizing religion and founded a number of Maṭhs or colleges'.[11] Eliot also observes that 'there is some reason to suppose that the Maṭh of Sringeri was founded on the site of a Buddhist monastery'.[12] Buddhist monasticism thus lives in the Order of Śaṅkara's monks.

BUDDHIST INFLUENCE ON RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHIC ATTITUDE OF INDIA

It is remarkable that all the systems of Indian philosophy are preoccupied with the problem of emancipation from the imperfections of worldly existence. In fact this has been the keynote and justification of philosophical speculation. Popular religion seems to have no influence on Indian philosophy. Even such realistic systems as Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika schools professed to set forth the correct path to *mokṣa,* ultimate emancipation. It is also a commonplace that all Indian philosophical schools are unanimous in their belief that this world is full of suffering, and wisdom lies in seeking release from the meshes and trammels of transmigration. The healthy and robust optimism of the Vedas and the Brāhmaṇas has receded here into the background beyond recognition. *Mokṣa* became not only the supreme value and the *summum bonum,* but also the only value. The claims of popular religion (*dharma*) and social, economical, and political well-being (*artha* and *kāma*) seem to be progressively shoved into the background.

It may not be unwarrantable to suppose that this change in the Brāhmaṇical attitude may have been inspired by the example of Buddhism. It is undeniable that Buddhism is pessimistic without reservation so far as this world and the heaven are concerned. Of course, the Upaniṣads are also characterized by their disparaging attitude towards them, and they frequently assert that the highest happiness and perfection are to be attained by means other than Vedic sacrifices and prayers, prescribed by the religion of the classes and masses, embodied in the Saṁhitās and Brāhmaṇas. But the Upaniṣads have not been chary to give them recognition as provisional values, and have laid down healthy restrictions for the initiation of select persons

[10] *Hinduism and Buddhism* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1954), II. p. 211.
[11] *Ibid.*, p. 175. [12] *Ibid.*, p. 211, f.n. 1.

into the highest mysteries. Their salutary caution prevented the sabotage of social and religious institutions by unenlightened or half-enlightened persons of immature morality swayed by hectic enthusiasm. Vedānta, for instance, emphasizes the qualifications of the aspirant student, and these necessarily can be the possession of a select minority. This also holds good of other systems of orthodox philosophy as interpreted by later exponents.

ATTITUDE OF BUDDHISM TO LIFE: ITS AFTERMATH

The unrelieved pessimism of Buddhism is the legacy of the teaching of Gautama Buddha, the historical founder of the new religion. It would be a travesty of truth to attribute this pessimism to economic depression or political tyranny. The Buddha was born a prince, destined to be a king, and was brought up in superabundant luxury and perfect ease and comfort. He had all the good things of the world and most alluring prospects. If any credence could be placed in the prophecies of the sages, he was assuredly destined, in the alternative, to be the unrivalled emperor of entire India. His renunciation of the world, and of his beautiful and devoted wife and lovely baby, cannot, by any stretch of imagination, be set down to the motive of escapism.

The *raison d'etre* of this revolution in the mind of the prince must be found in the irresistible call of the Highest, which demanded a life of strenuous hardship and toil. He resolved to find out the path for ending the misery of disease, old age, and death, which no economic readjustment or political reorientation can ever be conceived to eliminate. He was convinced that there was a remedy for these perennial evils, and the lure of the supernal achievement proved too strong to be declined. If, however, the dreary picture of the worldly life seems to be overdrawn or extravagant, the motive is not to be traced to defeatism or disappointed ambition. The good things of the world paled into insignificance before the brilliant goal and consummation, which loomed large before his vision. The same thing should be said of the sages of the Upaniṣads who found eternal joy and infinite perfection to be within their reach, and the renunciation of worldly life was not a bad bargain.

The realization of the imperfection of worldly life was, after all, the negative side of the inspiration of these exceptional men who turned their back upon the humdrum life of average men and women. The claims of the highest and most perfect consummation did override all other considerations which have an irresistible appeal to lesser men. But, after all is said and done, one cannot deny that eventually this negative side of spiritual life became the incubus and sole obsession of the people of lower calibre. They found particular satisfaction in drawing a lurid picture of the world

and exaggerating its shortcomings beyond limits. The result was an immature other-worldliness which even laid hold of kings and potentates. It would have been exceedingly fortunate if there had been the *alter ego* of the Buddha, who could be the paramount emperor of India. The political unification of India, which was desiderated by Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and the fulfilment of which demanded not a lesser personality than that of the Buddha, remained only an unrealized dream. The sudden revulsion of such mighty emperors as Aśoka and Harṣa against political glory had an enervating influence upon later history. India fell a prey to the invasion of the barbarians of Central Asia, who, after their apostasy from Buddhism to Islam, developed untrammelled brutality encouraged by the seeming sanction of the new faith. India succumbed to foreign invasion and was ruled by the foreigners, who had nothing but hatred for India's culture, for over eight centuries.

In this context of political downfall, the exaggerated and extravagant portraiture of the seamy side of worldly life, which was propagated without let or hindrance by the later upholders of asceticism, proved to be a veritable opium to the people. It is a pity that in this doleful chorus of other-worldliness the followers of other creeds also joined their voices. The *Yogavāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa* is a typical product of the time, and sings the swansong of national decadence and death. Religion degenerated into a device of escapism. The spiritual and political degeneration was unwittingly hastened by the custodians of the Buddhist religion in India. The contempt for worldly goods became a dangerous craze and fashion.

BUDDHIST INFLUENCE ON ART AND ARCHITECTURE

Buddhism was, however, a positive force in the early centuries of the Christian era. The Buddha was deified and the masses worshipped him as supreme Godhead. The Mahāyāna theology propounded the doctrine of the eternal Buddha, which was not distinguishable from the absolute Brahman of the Upaniṣads. The cult of the *bodhisattvas*, who made it the mission of their life to bring solace to suffering mankind and to elevate their moral and spiritual equipment, exercised a powerful influence upon the popular mind. These *bodhisattvas* did not turn their back upon the imperfect and seemingly unholy world. On the contrary, they sedulously set out to ameliorate the conditions of the unhappy beings of the world. The Bodhisattva cult represented a positive reaction against the extreme pessimism and other-worldliness of the early exponents of the vanities of the world. The result was the release of superabundant creative power. It led to the creation of poetry, drama, philosophy, and an exalted code of selfless ethics. Instead of seeking private and personal salvation, people came to value the service of fellow-beings to be the surer and better path to higher life. In the

Gāndhāra school of sculpture and architecture, and in its national orientation, which found its consummation in the Gupta period, and in the cave-paintings of Ajanta, we find a resurgence of positive devotion and love. The images of the Buddha and the superb *stūpas* that have survived the ravages of time and the vandalism of barbarians bear eloquent testimony to the beneficial influence of Buddhist spiritualism.

It may be a paradox that the Buddha, who decried the worship of gods and goddesses, was himself turned into the supreme God of love and benevolence. However, the creative impulse of the followers of the Buddha spread its wholesome contagion to the Brāhmaṇas and the Jains also. The Vedic religion has no scope for the worship of images and idols, and there is considerable substance and truth in the contention of the Ārya Samājists that image-worship was only a latter-day innovation. Whatever may have been the position in the Vedic period, worship of gods and construction of temples have become widespread from the first century of the Christian era. Scholars have found in this change-over the influence of Buddhist art and architecture, which may have derived the original inspiration from the Greeks, who adopted the gospel of the Buddha.

BUDDHIST INFLUENCE ON LOGIC

From the very beginning Buddhism had to fight with the orthodox priesthood. The Brāhmaṇas were a highly intellectual class of people and produced works of high philosophical merit to vindicate their religious stand. For this purpose they invented powerful systems of logic and philosophy. This naturally provoked mighty reactions from the custodians of the Buddhist Church. Nāgārjuna criticized the Nyāya theory of knowledge and showed the untenability of its logical concepts. Latterly, logic was made precise and exact by the school of Diṅnāga and Dharmakīrti. It made substantial contributions to logic, which, for the time being, won the palm of victory over the rival systems. The reforms of Diṅnāga and Dharmakīrti regarding the structure of syllogism and their advocacy of the enormous importance of induction (*vyāpti*) and the major premiss had to be accepted even by the orthodox logicians. The constant tussle and fight, which did not give quarter to the opponents, evoked the latent powers of logical thinking and carried them to the highest pitch of precision. Ultimately, it became difficult to discriminate between the rivals. But the overall effect of these logical exercises was entirely salutary in that it invigorated the intellect of the nation. The Buddhist logicians, who were for the most part recruited from the intellectual classes, and so also their orthodox rivals tremendously gained by the enforced necessity of developing accurate instruments of meticulous thinking and linguistic precision. The Jaina

logicians were later entrants into the arena, and their debt to both the schools is too deep and wide to require specific enumeration. It is a pity that the chances of this healthy competition almost disappeared after the destruction of the Buddhist monasteries.

The creation of Navya-Nyāya was inspired by the bold and unconventional views of the school of Prabhākara, which had pronounced affinities with, and profound sympathies for, the Buddhist logicians, particularly Dharmakīrti. It is not a flippant ribaldry which led Śrīharṣa, the protagonist of Vedāntic logic, to declare that Prabhākara was a kinsman of the Buddha.[13] His repudiation of negation as an objective category and characterization of it as a subjective notion are declared to be a perilous analogue of Dharmakīrti's theory.

Udayana is the last philosopher to have given a masterly critique of the Buddhist theories, and after that we do not hear of any Buddhist philosopher and logician who caused a headache to the Brāhmaṇical schools. It may be because of the intellectual decadence of the Buddhist Order or of the loss of Buddhist literature due to the destruction of the monasteries. Whatever may be the cause of the supersession of the Buddhist schools, the loss to the country after the final disappearance of the Buddhist Order from India is stupendous in magnitude. The loss was equally enormous to the Buddhist countries, whose intellectual culture was kept alive by the emigration of Buddhist scholars from India. The cultural and spiritual ties between India and the Buddhist countries of Asia were snapped by a cruel fate. The mass conversion of Indonesia to Islam was undoubtedly facilitated by the suspension of the interchange of cultural embassies after the disappearance of Buddhism from India.

BUDDHISM AND MONISTIC VEDĀNTA

The pronounced affinities and parallelisms between Mahāyāna schools of philosophy and the school founded by Śaṅkarācārya have been noticed by previous thinkers, both old and modern. Śaṅkarācārya's philosophy of the doctrine of Māyā shows unmistakable points of agreement and contact with those of the Mādhyamikas. Śrīharṣa had given a spirited reply to the charge that Śaṅkarācārya only reinstated the Buddhist philosophy and camouflaged it by distorting Upaniṣadic texts. He regards it a deliberate lie or an outcome of stolid misunderstanding of a profound philosophy. Undeniably there is justice and substance in the contention of Śrīharṣa and

[13] *Gurur-dhiyam abhāvasya sthāne sthāne'bhiṣiktavān, prasiddha eva loke'smin Buddhabandhuḥ Prabhākaraḥ—Khaṇḍana-khaṇḍa-khādya* (published by Swami Balanandaji, Banaras, 1940), II. p. 544.

other exponents of Śaṅkara's philosophy that the accusation is either malicious or slipshod.

There is no doubt that there is a fundamental difference between Śaṅkara's Vedānta and Mahāyāna philosophy. But so far as the unreality of the phenomenal plurality is taken into consideration, there seems to be perfect agreement between them. The unreality of this plurality is not asserted in the Upaniṣads in unambiguous language, though it has been plausibly deduced from the implications of the doctrines affirmed therein. Śaṅkarācārya explained away the world of plurality by declaring it to be a creation of Māyā, an inscrutable principle which cannot be asserted either as real or as unreal. The logical weapons by which the unreality of the plurality of subjects and objects is brought home were already forged in the arsenal of the Mādhyamika school. Śaṅkarācārya exploited these dialectical weapons with a view to establishing his monistic metaphysics. The later dialecticians of the Vedānta school carried this destructive logic to the highest limits of perfection. They elaborately scrutinized the concepts and categories of the realistic schools and demonstrated the incompatibilities and contradictions in these accredited dogmas and notions. The later developments registered in the Vedāntic dialectics have outdistanced the Mādhyamika arguments beyond measure, both in technique and cogency. This was the natural result of the refinements of the realists' definitions and the consequential embellishments and improvements in the apparatus of destructive logic.

It is almost a truism that the reorientation of idealistic thought by Aśvaghoṣa, Asaṅga, and Vasubandhu brought it perilously near to the absolutism of the Upaniṣads.[14] But the idealism of Diṅnāga and Dharmakīrti steered clear of the monistic predilections and reaffirmed the plurality of impersonal centres of pure consciousness subject to perpetual flux. Śaṅkarācārya criticized this subjective idealism of Diṅnāga's school and adumbrated his terms of truce on the condition of the opponent's acquiescence in an unchangeable absolute consciousness as the ultimate Reality behind the veil of multiplicity.

It would be a mistake to suppose that Śaṅkarācārya was indebted to Vasubandhu or Aśvaghoṣa for his monistic philosophy. The Buddhist philosophers owed their inspiration to the Upaniṣads, when they gave a monistic interpretation to the doctrines of the Buddha. Śaṅkarācārya derived his monistic inspiration direct from the Upaniṣads, and only worked out the negative logic in order to vindicate his position. In this negative enterprise, he was assuredly influenced by the Mādhyamika polemics, and

[14] Cf. *Mahāyāna-sūtrālaṅkāra* of Asaṅga (Ed. Sylvain Lévi. Paris, 1907), IX.15.

he utilized them for reinforcing his logical standpoint. This was previously done also by Gauḍapāda in his *Māṇḍūkya-kārikā*, and Śaṅkara only followed in the footsteps of this mastermind, who is by tradition accredited to have been the teacher of Śaṅkara's own teacher Govindapāda.

One thing is worthy of remark. Gauḍapāda's attitude was conciliatory, sympathetic, and friendly. He proposed *rapprochement* between the Vedāntist and the Buddhist, and showed that both in detail and fundamental position there was no difference and no cause for quarrel. But, obviously, he failed in his mission to win over the Buddhists. Śaṅkarācārya's uncompromising attitude to the Buddhists was most probably influenced by this failure of Gauḍapāda's mission and the unfriendly reaction of the Buddhist Church. He realized that the Buddhists were confirmed in their antagonism to Vedic tradition, and there was not the slightest chance of reconciliation. The Buddhists were truculent, and Śaṅkarācārya took up the gauntlet and waged unceasing war of ideas against the Buddhists for their hostility to the Vedic tradition. If we are to believe in later tradition, we shall have to accept the conclusion that Śaṅkarācārya won victory over the Buddhists and rehabilitated the people's faith in the Vedic authority.

Though victorious, Śaṅkarācārya adopted many things of value from the Buddhists. The differentiation of reality into three grades, viz. absolute (*pāramārthika*), empirical (*vyāvahārika*), and apparent (*prātibhāsika*), is obviously influenced by the similar procedure adopted by the Mādhyamikas. We do not find any allusion to such distinction in the original Upaniṣads. The destructive dialectic of Nāgārjuna was of great service to Śaṅkara in establishing the doctrine of Māyā and the phenomenality of the objective plurality. This dialectic was enormously developed by the later exponents of Vedānta and reached the acme of perfection in Śrīharṣa's *Khaṇḍana-khaṇḍa-khādya*, in Citsukha's *Citsukhī* or *Tattva-pradīpikā*, and in the works of other dialecticians. Buddhism was entirely assimilated with the monistic Vedānta and the result was an enforced *anschluss* of Vedāntism and Buddhism, and unfortunately not a free and frank reconciliation.

TĀNTRICISM IN THE BUDDHIST CULT

It is a puzzle how and why Buddhism came under the spell of the Tāntric cult, which had a dominant share of sorcery and magic. It sought to acquire control over good and evil spirits and thereby gain power to secure advantages, temporal and spiritual. Latterly, in its phases of Vajrayāna and Sahajayāna, it was obscured by symbolism, which apparently smacks of sexual licence and libertinism. The hidden meaning of this symbolism has been shown by some scholars to be purely spiritual. But the external vesture is certainly a caviare to the general mind, if not positively

repulsive. It would have been more wholesome if the symbolism were of an innocent character.

The emergence of Vajrayāna and Sahajayāna in the fold of Mahāyāna Buddhism has been recently defended by Anagarika Govinda,[15] who does not find it to be an unnatural grafting or a monstrosity of eroticism. He has laid stress on the point that the Buddhist ideal of *nirvāṇa* to be attained by *prajñā*, i.e. by realization of *śūnyatā*, is not lost sight of in these cults. What, however, marks a new departure is that total subjugation of the animal instincts and starvation of normal appetites are not deemed to be the condition of it. The practice of Tāntric *yoga* in collaboration with female assistants is not inspired by erotic motive, but, on the contrary, aims at its sublimation. The present writer, however, confesses his incompetence to understand the underlying mysticism of these Tāntric cults.

DECLINE AND EXTINCTION OF THE BUDDHIST CHURCH IN INDIA

It will be far from accurate to hold that Tāntric cults in Buddhism were responsible for the decline of its prestige or its downfall. Tāntric Buddhism survives in trans-Himalayan countries without entailing any one of these untoward consequences. It may be a historical fact that the Buddhists were defeated by the Brāhmaṇa intellectuals in public debates, and this may have undermined their popularity with kings and aristocrats in many a province in India. But intellectual superiority is not the *sine qua non* of the survival of a religious sect or community. The existence of the minor sects and communities which derive their authority from vernacular gospels is a pointer. The physical disappearance of Buddhism as a religion is immediately due to the destruction of the monasteries and the massacre of Buddhist monks on a mass scale by the Turks, freshly converted to Islam, who gained political supremacy in India. This was the immediate and most potent cause of the disappearance of Buddhism from this country as an institutional religion. It is, again, an enigma that Buddhism did not live on in the memory of the people, and died almost unwept, unhonoured, and unsung. It is a challenging phenomenon that demands re-examination of its cultural values which may throw light on this enormous tragedy.

It is undeniable that the evangelism of resurgent Vedic culture, inaugurated by Kumārila Bhaṭṭa and accentuated by Śaṅkarācārya's missionary activity, weakened the hold of Buddhism on the intellectual classes. But it would be an exaggeration to assert that this Brāhmaṇical crusade led to the disappearance of Buddhism from India. It was at most

[15] Vide, *2500 Years of Buddhism* (Publications Division, Govt. of India, 1956), pp. 361 ff.

an intellectual war, where victory alternated with defeat and vice versa. These two orthodox reformers belong to the eighth and ninth centuries, and Buddhism was a flourishing religion during this time under the patronage of the Pāla kings in Bengal and Magadha. Yuan Chwang (Hieun-Tsang) found the Sāmmitīya sect to be a powerful body in Sind. But it was losing hold in the north-west and the south. Yuan Chwang observes that the monks of Sind were indolent and ease-loving.

It is a sad commentary on Buddhism as a religion and the separatist tendencies of its adherents that these Sindhi monks had supported the Arab invaders and helped them in extirpating the Brāhmaṇa dynasty in Sind as early as 712 A.D. It is also a surprise that the Buddhists submitted to wholesale conversion, whereas the Hindus survived this onslaught and preserved their ancestral faith, in spite of the persecutions for recalcitrance or offer of blandishments as the price of apostasy. This facile change-over to an alien faith underlines the inherent weakness of the hold of Buddhism on the masses. It was perhaps too sublime and too ethereal for the general mass, and its negligence of the social sanctions made the laity too lax and flexible. A concrete religious idea and the simplicity of its creed were the merits of Islam, and this proved too strong for the general people. Later on the theistic development in Mahāyāna Buddhism tried to satisfy the cravings of the mass mind for a concrete object of worship. This was, however, most probably a later innovation which was not in existence in Siṇd. But Mahāyāna enthusiasm perhaps crossed all its limits and made the Buddhist pantheon a huge colossus in which there was every chance of missing the forest in the trees. It was too vast and too massive for the average mind, and perhaps aggravated confusion rather than crystallized the faith of the people.

Buddhism was not interested in the organization of a lay community from the very beginning of its career. Latterly, it became too catholic and liberal and this is probably one of the contributory causes of its expansion in the Far East. The worship of local gods and goddesses was not tabooed in general by Mahāyāna. As a consequence of ultra-liberalism, Buddhism tended to become more or less a personal religion or a question of religious preference, so far as the lay community was concerned. In the observance of external ceremonies and customs, such as birth, marriage, and death, the Buddhist Church did not formulate any special rules and regulations, and in regard to these important phases of social life, its general policy was one of non-interference or tacit acquiescence in the current ritualism.

The Brāhmaṇa priesthood, on the other hand, was too pliant and readily gave recognition to the new gods and goddesses introduced by the Tāntric cults, as they thought that these were but peculiar expressions of the supreme Godhead, the absolute Brahman. The assimilative capacity of the

Brāhmaṇas had no difficulty in absorbing the lay adherents of Buddhism and Buddhist cults and in satisfying their religious scruples by putting the seal of approval on their religious practices. Recognition of the Buddha as an incarnation of God was inspired by this accommodative and assimilative spirit. After the disappearance of the Buddhist Church, which consisted of the monastic Order, Buddhism ceased to maintain its separate existence. But it has not, however, become extinct either as a cult or as a philosophy. It exists in the Hindu masses and classes totally assimilated and harmonized with the old religion. The old religion of the Vedas also does not exist in its pristine purity, and it has been metamorphosed into what is popularly called Hinduism which is a wonderful mosaic of which Buddhism is as much an integral element as the old Vedic culture. It will not be inappropriate to conclude that Buddhism lives in India, though not the Buddhist Church.

A RÉSUMÉ

The Buddha was sceptical of the ceremonial part of Vedic religion as the vehicle of salvation. This is also endorsed in the Upaniṣads and the *Gītā*. But in the latter, we find a reconciliation between the practical life of the average man and the theoretical and contemplative life of the spiritual aspirant. The Vedic duties, which are obligatory and do not hold out any prospect of personal advantage, are to be observed as categorical imperatives. The subordination of personal ambition to impersonal duty is asserted to be an instrument of mental purification, which is the condition precedent of the emergence of inquisitiveness regarding the ultimate Truth and Destiny. This synthetic approach is absent in Buddhism.

In the Upaniṣads freedom from all the worldly limitations is set forth as the ultimate Destiny. But the Upaniṣads were the close-preserve of a limited minority of the elect. The Buddha broke the shell of secrecy and preached it to all and sundry. There is, however, no difference of opinion on the ultimacy and finality of the supreme goal. It is almost obvious that the wide-spread recognition of this truth is due to the incessant propaganda of the Buddhist Church.

Every Hindu is irresistibly convinced of the impermanence of the worldly life and the vanity of its charms. Life on earth is regarded even by the cautious Brāhmaṇa, who does not despise the good things of earth and heaven, as a temporary sojourn and a preparation for the infinite future progress. The awareness of the superior claims of future life was the legacy of the Buddhist creed, and its pessimistic bias was sought to be checked by the emphasis on the duties of the householder's life.

The Buddha laid emphasis upon inner purity and on the necessity of

subjugation of lower passions of animal life as the preliminary condition of spiritual progress; the Brāhmaṇas agreed, but they were more realistic in their attitude, and devised ways and means for their canalization along rational lines. Married life, for instance, was not regarded as sin, but a necessary means of race-preservation and a safeguard against the promiscuity of sex-indulgence.

The Buddha's emphasis upon inner purification and the futility of external observances and ceremonials exerted a healthy influence on the priesthood. The ceremonial religion was defended by them only in so far as it tended to bring about moral regeneration. The necessity of setting a limit to one's desires and ambitions was recognized by the custodians of the Vedic religion, and it may not be an exaggeration to attribute the emergence of this moral consciousness to Buddhist propaganda.

The caste hierarchy advocated by the Vedic religion had to be justified by the Brāhmaṇas on the basis of moral and intellectual values. Heredity by itself came to be subordinated to personal merits. A Brāhmaṇa without learning and moral elevation was declared to be a Brāhmaṇa only in birth (*jāti-brāhmaṇa eva saḥ*), bereft of a superior status. In the *Mahābhārata* universal love and sympathy were set down as the criterion of Brāhmaṇahood.

The importance of race, birth, and heredity was recognized to have values only for the social organization. In and by themselves, and without the moral, spiritual, and intellectual background, these distinctions were recognized to be possessed of minor significance, without any relevance to the higher stages of evolution. The unintermittent propaganda of the Buddhist missionaries must have been responsible for this chastening of national pride, and the Brāhmaṇas had to take up a defensive attitude against their critics.

Buddhism brought about a healthy and salutary reformation in the inner life of the people of India. Outside the national frontiers, it went a long way in the task of evolving the divine in the uncultivated races of Asia which were notorious for their ferocity and predatory proclivities. It was continuously dinned into the ears of men and women of diverse races that violence and enmity only lead to frustration. Happiness can be achieved only by self-discipline and subjugation of the animal in man. These are eternal truths and will have to be cherished and nurtured so long as mankind does not transcend the limitations of animal instincts. The pragmatic value of these truths inculcated by Buddhism in the way of peace and reconcilation has been emphasized by sober persons and thinkers of the world. There can be no reason for accusing these advocates of the Buddha's gospel of exaggeration or theological bias.

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